

HISTORY *of*
CONGREGATIONALISM
in SUFFOLK

T. J. HOSKEN



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History of Congregationalism

and Memorials of the Churches
of our Order in Suffolk.

BY

T. J. HOSKEN, OF LOWESTOFT.

" 'Tis opportune to look back upon old times and contemplate our forefathers. Great examples grow thin and need to be fetched from the passed world."—

Sir Thomas Brown.

" I have used very great diligence to inform myself that I might inform my readers of what follows ; and although I cannot adorn it with eloquence, yet I will do it with sincerity."—*Isaac Walton's Life of George Herbert.*

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REV. JOHN BROWNE, B.A., Wrentham.
Chairman of the Union, 1877.

PREFACE.

MORE than forty years have elapsed since John Browne, of Wrentham, issued his truly great book on "The History of Congregationalism in Suffolk and Norfolk." During these years great and important changes have taken place in all our churches, and a modern edition of this work has been long overdue.

As Mr. Browne's book owed its origin to the generosity of Mr. D. H. Goddard, the present work owes its origin to the generosity of Mr. H. Fairfax Harwood, of Tuddenham Hall, Ipswich. When Mr. Harwood suggested a re-issue of this history, and asked me to undertake it, it was with great reluctance and diffidence that I consented ; I felt then, as I feel now, that others could have done the work much more efficiently than I could. At the same time, realising the importance and value of the work, I could not refuse ; and so, conscious of many defects, I faced the task. I need hardly say that this book is largely an example of building upon another man's foundation. But for the devoted labours of John Browne this work had never seen the light. In perusing the original volume nothing has impressed me more than the immense labour and patient research devoted to it. In that work Mr. Browne has laid, not only the churches of Suffolk and Norfolk, but Congregationalism throughout the country under a vast debt of gratitude.

In carrying out the purpose I had in my mind of bringing this work up to date, I found materials accumulating so rapidly that, if the volume was to be kept within reasonable limits, much of the original, not strictly relevant, would have to be omitted. Accordingly I have re-written the whole, omitting the Norfolk section, and that relating to the Baptist churches, together with some of the footnotes that seemed to me unnecessary.

My thanks are due to Mr. Harwood, who is bearing the financial burden of this work, and also to the pastors and officers of the churches, who have so kindly supplied me with information relating to the later history of the churches.

I cannot do better here than quote the words of John Browne, in the original preface to his book—

“ With all its defects, and no one is more conscious of them than I am, I hope this book will prove a monument to the memory of deservedly honoured men long since gone to their rest and reward ; a faithful record of effort, toil, and suffering in a great and good cause ; a stimulus to the present generation of Congregationalists, urging them to conduct worthy of their forefathers ; a witness to the world that Congregationalism is not an impracticable theory, but a form of Christian life and effort, rich in blessing to any neighbourhood which entertains it, because it is the embodiment of Christian liberty in its largest possible corporate manifestation.

To God, whose truth I have endeavoured to maintain ; to Christ, the image of whose church is here reflected ; and to the Holy Spirit, who alone can quicken the truth, the church, and the hearts of men, I reverently commend this book.”

T. J. HOSKEN.

Lowestoft.

1920.

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REV. T. J. HOSKEN.
Chairman of the Union, 1907.

SUFFOLK CONGREGATIONALISM.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

NORFOLK and Suffolk have long been distinguished by the zeal for Protestantism cherished and manifested in their towns and villages.

“One of the first sparks of the glorious Reformation of the Church which has enlightened all Europe, as well as many other parts of the world, was struck at the small village of Stradbroom, in Suffolk; for Dr. Grosthead,* afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, a divine of great courage, learning, and piety, who was contemporary with Wycliffe, and assisted him in his writings against the reigning superstitions and corruptions of the Romish Church, was a native of that parish.”†

One of the first victims of the Writ “*De hæretico comburendo*” ‡ was a Norfolk man. Foxe, in his “*Acts and Monuments*,” says: “As King Henerie the fourth . . . was the first of all English kings that began the unmerciful burning of Christ’s saints for standing against the Pope; so was William Sawtre, the true and faithful martyr of Christ, the first of them all in Wycliffe’s time which I find to be burned in the raigne of the aforesaid King, which was in the yeere of our Lord, 1400.”

This William Sawtre, “parish priest of the Church of St. Margaret in the towne of Linne” (Lynn) appeared before the Bishop of Norwich on the last day of April, 1399, and being examined said “he would not worship the Cross on which Christ suffered, but only the Christ that suffered upon the Cross”; and being further

* Original spelling, Groseteste † Gillingwater’s “*Bury*,” pp. 125-6.

‡ The Archbishop, or Bishop of every diocese, had the power to convict any for heresy; this is by the common law. But it was “by the Writ *De hæretico comburendo*, granted out of chancery upon a certificate of such conviction that heretics were burnt.”—Jacob’s *Law Dictionary*.

examined "concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, said and affirmed that after the words of consecration, by the priest duly pronounced, it remained very bread, and the same bread which was before the words spoken."

He was prevailed upon to abjure his opinions on May 25th in the churchyard of the chapel of St. James in Lynn; and the next day in the Church of the Hospital of St. John "he sware and took his oath upon the Holy Evangelists that he would never after that time preach openly and publicly the aforesaid conclusions," etc.; but he afterwards repented of his weakness, and was treated as a relapsed heretic, condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, degraded, and handed over to the secular power, and then, by a special decree of the King, consigned to the fire. "We commend you as straightly as we may and can . . . that you do cause the said William Sawtre to be put into the fire, and there in the same fire really to be burned, to the great horror of his offence, and the manifest examples of other Christians." He accordingly suffered in London.

In the year 1424, John Florence, of Shelton, and Richard Bulward, of Earlsam, John Goddesell, of Ditchingham, and Sir Hugh Pie, chaplain of Ludney (Loddon), were more than suspected of heresy, and had to purge themselves. "After this, in the yeere of our Lord, 1428, King Henry the Sixth send down most cruell letters of commission . . . by virtue of which we find in olde monuments that, within short space after, John Exeter, one of the commissioners, attached six persons in the towne of Bungay . . . and committed them to William Day and William Roe, constables of the towne of Bungay . . . whose names through the antiquitie of the monument, were so defaced that wee could not attain to the perfect knowledge of them all; only three names partly remained in the booke to bee read, which were these: John Whaddon, of Tinterdon, Kent; Bartlemew Monk, of Earlsam, Norfolk; Corneleader, a married man, William Scutts. These three were in the custody of the Duke of Norfolk, at his castle of Framingham" (Framlingham).

"Besides these we also finde in the said old monuments within the diocesse of Norfolke and Suffolke, specially in the townes of Beckles, Ersham, and Ludney (Loddon), a great number both of men and women to have been vexed and cast into prison, and after their abjuration brought to open shame in churches and markets, by the said Bishop of the diocesse called William, and his chancellor, William Bernham, John Exeter being the Register therein; so that within the space of three or four yeeres, that is from the yeere 1428 unto the yeere 1431, about the number of 120 men and women were examined, and sustained great vexation for

the profession of the Christian faith ; of whom some were only taken upon suspicion, for eating of meats prohibited upon vigil daies, who, upon their purgation made, escaped more easily away and with lesse punishment, whose names here follow subscribed."

Then follows "A catalogue of good men and women troubled for suspicion of heresie," amounting to the number of 110, "some of whom were cruelly handled, and some were put to death and burned," and others were forced to abjure and do penance. Most of them had received their instruction from William White, a priest, who was a scholar and disciple of Wycliffe, and who, in September, 1428, was burnt at Norwich.

Such were the men and women who, in after ages, became Puritans, and still later Separatists.

After the lapse of a hundred years, in the reign of Henry VIII., we find Bilney "twice plucked from the pulpit" by monks and friars of St. George's Chapel, Ipswich ; accused and examined in thirty-four articles, and finally burnt at Norwich in the Lollard's pit, Anno 1531 ; and Nicholas Bayfield, formerly a monk of Bury St. Edmunds, burnt for holding heretical opinions, and disseminating the works of German reformers.

In 1546, one Kerby, and Roger Clarke, of Mendlesham, were apprehended at Ipswich, of whom the former was burnt at Ipswich and the latter at Bury. It was in this reign the English Reformation commenced, but it started upon a wrong principle. Whatever religious motives may have prompted Henry in taking up the role of Reformer nothing is clearer than that his great objective was political and selfish, rather than strictly religious. Henry VIII. never was a Protestant. He lived and died a Roman Catholic. The utmost that can be said for him, on the religious side, is that he was a Reformer of the Romish Church. His supreme aim was to throw off the authority of the Pope, and to set up his own. And in 1531, the Act of Supremacy was passed, which gave him unlimited power over the whole machinery and organisation of the Church in England. That Act, as it is the corner stone of the English Reformed Establishment, must not be passed by in silence, especially as to it, or to the principle involved in it, may be traced all the tyrannical proceedings connected with the Church for many years after it was recognised as law. The Act of Supremacy was the very "*fons et origo mali*"—the source and spring of most of the evils as well as the inspiration of the heroisms which it is our lot to describe.

By this Act of Supremacy Henry claimed for himself, his heirs and successors, absolute control over all the offices and affairs of the Church of England. In a sentence he arrogated to himself all the authority that had heretofore been vested in the Pope. This

instrument gave him almost unlimited power over the lives and consciences of his subjects ; a power which he, and the creatures of his tyrannical will, did not hesitate to use. Dr. Burn says of it : " There was no branch of sovereignty with which the princes of this realm, for about a century after the Reformation, were more delighted than that of being the supreme head of the Church, imagining (as it seemeth) that all that power which the Pope claimed and exercised (so far as he was able) was, by statutes abrogating the papal authority, annexed to the imperial crown of this realm. . . . And those princes of this realm above mentioned seem to have considered themselves plainly as popes in their own dominion."

Henry's Reformation, as might have been expected, was a very incongruous one. The Church of which he was head was a strange medley of Romanism and Protestantism, in which the former predominated, and it was moulded or fashioned according to his own imperious will. But the strong Protestant element in the Church, with its leaning to puritanism rather than to Anglicanism, was not without its influence in the future destinies of religion in England. " The light shined in the midst of darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."

On the death of Henry, Protestant opinions were still further developed, and during the short reign of his son, Edward VI., the *doctrines* of the reformers were set forth and encouraged ; but when this reign came to an untimely close, a fierce storm of persecution fell upon the professors of the evangelical faith—a storm which Englishmen are never likely to forget.

1553. Mary owed her throne in no small degree to the piety and loyalty of the Protestant people of Suffolk. They believed her to be the rightful heir to the crown, and aided her effectually in asserting her right, stipulating only as the price of their services that they should be unmolested in the exercise of their religion. But Mary kept no faith with heretics, and during her reign many martyrs in Norfolk and Suffolk sealed their testimony with their blood. First among the Suffolk martyrs of this dark reign was Dr. Rowland Taylor, who was burnt on Aldham Common, near Hadleigh. In 1555, Robert Samuel, minister of East Bergholt, was burnt at Ipswich ; and Nicholas Pike, of Earl Stonham, about the same time. In the following year, Anne Potter and Joan Trunchfield were burnt in Ipswich ; and in 1558, Alexander Gouch and Alice Driver were burnt in the same town. In 1556, Thomas Spicer, John Denny, and Edmund Poole were burnt at Beccles ; in the following year Simon Miller, Elizabeth Cooper, and Cicely Ormes were burnt at Norwich ; and John Noyes, in the same year, at Laxfield. The Norwich records contain a similar list of those

who went to swell "the glorious army of martyrs."

Thus practically and impressively was the lesson taught that men ought, at any expense, even that of life itself, to obey God rather than man; and thus earnestly was the seed sown which in after years was to bring forth much fruit to the glory of God.

Many Protestants fled from this persecution and found an asylum at Frankfort, and other places on the Continent, where they continued to reside and carry on their work till the death of Mary.

The history of this continental movement is full of interest, especially for its bearing upon Congregationalism as distinct from Presbyterianism. The Marian persecutions were directed not only against those with leanings to puritanism, but against all who, in any way, favoured the doctrines of the Reformed Church; consequently puritans and high church ritualists found themselves under the same ban, and sharers in the same exile. In Frankfort these two parties, led respectively by Cox and Knox, soon came into collision, and that strife between the members of the English Church commenced which has not yet ceased to rage.

But it appears there were not only High-Churchmen and Puritans at Frankfort. We are particularly interested in a statement made by Heylin, who when speaking of "the troubles at Frankfort," says:—

"A new discipline was devised by Ashley, a gentleman of good note among the laity here, and his party; whereby the superintendency of pastors and elders was laid aside, and the supreme power in all ecclesiastical causes put into the hands of congregations, which gave an original to Independantism, and thereby further disturbance to the Church and peace of Christendom."

We are concerned only with the fact, the reflection on it does not trouble us. We thus find the three great parties which exist and struggle in our own days—Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Independent or Congregationalist—began their course at about the same time. All spoke out at Frankfort, and on the death of Mary returned to England to disseminate their principles—with what success the succeeding pages of this book will unfold. Here then begins our history.

CHAPTER II.

PURITANISM.

IN the Jubilee Lectures of the Congregational Union, Dr. Allon, speaking of the Puritans, says, "the grave difficulty in the treatment of any selected period or phase in history is that it is only part of a greater whole related to it by a thousand subtle causations and consequences. The entire human history, indeed, both in its national sections and its ethnological whole, is one organic development, free as the human will, and yet so ruled by causes and circumstances that no given stage could have been transposed, no event could have been independent of its relationships and environment." Great events, therefore, great men even, are the distinct product of their time—the result of antecedent causes, the expression of transitional forces, the causes of subsequent developments. "No great person in history could have been what he was in any age or circumstances other than his own. . . . And, however great, the man receives more than he can give. The cause of much, he is caused by still more. He may modify the events and characteristics of his generation, he cannot change them. He is the birth of his time, the child of his age. Men make epochs because the times have ripened for an epoch—the hour makes possible the man." It is in the light of the great truth underlying these words that we must study, if we would understand, Puritanism. Puritanism was not a sudden upheaval in the nation's life, like some volcanic outburst of which no previous warning or premonition has been given. It was rather the result of definite causes stretching away back through many generations. Indications of the principles for which puritanism stood and the protest in which it crystallised, are evident long before the Reformation. Even within the Church of Rome itself there were not wanting evidences of the puritan spirit. One has only to recall the names of John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Wycliffe and the Lollards, the Waldenses, Luther, Pascal, and many others, to learn how deeply the roots of what came to be called the Puritan movement had struck themselves in the soil of the church. But the Reformation may be regarded as supremely a Puritan movement,

an outburst of the more spiritual conception of the Church against the ecclesiastical tyranny of Rome, an uprising of the religious sentiment against its moral corruption. In England this specific phase of it was largely suppressed under the tyrannical rule of Henry VIII., and the brutal persecutions of Mary, but it was still there, indestructible and unconquerable; and in the course of time it came to its own, and saved England from the threatened blight of the Romish domination which has left its mark upon so many countries and peoples of the world.

On November 17th, 1558, thousands of English hearts rejoiced in the death of Mary Tudor, whose reign had been marked by unspeakable cruelties and bloodshed; and amid a scene of unparalleled enthusiasm and rejoicings Elizabeth ascended the throne. Many of those who had been exiled in the preceding reign returned, bringing with them the simpler evangelical faith and ritual than prevailed in the homeland. Their first aim and effort was to introduce these into the protestantism of England, and so to bring the Church to a nearer conformity to the New Testament pattern. But the Queen had no sympathy with this new movement. Unlike her father and her sister, Elizabeth was a Protestant. Accepting the Reformation she was sternly antagonistic to Rome, and resolutely withstood all its attempts to re-establish itself in England. Imperious in the assertion of her royal prerogative, she not only resisted the political assumptions of Rome—she claimed in the reformed Church the place which the Pope occupied in the Church of Rome—to be its absolute head and governor. Within the Church, nay, within the realm, she would tolerate no movement that might question her authority or weaken her absolute sway. Romanist and Separatist were therefore repressed with equal vigour. In the realm of England there could be but one Church, of which she would be supreme ruler. And so in the first year of her reign she brought in her first Act of Uniformity. The Act was passed by a subservient Parliament, in spite of the protests of the Convocation and the bishops; and when the bishops resigned their sees in consequence, she proceeded at once to fill the vacancies. She made Matthew Parker, a native of Norwich, Archbishop of Canterbury; but so doubtful was the consecration of the Archbishop, as to its authority, that a special Act had to be passed through Parliament affirming it, and “declaring the regal manner of making and consecrating of archbishops and bishops of the realm to be good, lawful, and perfect.” Under this Act of Uniformity Nonconformity was henceforth regarded as a crime and treated as such. But consciences enlightened by the Word of God, and souls quickened by the Spirit of God, are apt to break the bands with which kings of the earth and rulers may attempt to bind them.

And so Elizabeth and her Archbishop found it ; they discovered that conscience paid more attention to the New Testament than to an Act of Parliament, and that pious men, while they respected their prince, feared God and sympathized with those who said, " Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

Multitudes among the laity and a goodly number of the clergy in East Anglia, longed for a simpler service and a purer Church. They had taken one step out of the corruption and death of mediævalism, they were anxious to take the next ; *doctrine* had been to a great extent reformed, they now wanted a reformed *discipline* and *worship*. They sought the removal of everything inconsistent with the simplicity of the Gospel and symbolical of old errors ; they desired to realise the restoration of the original idea of the Church of Christ.

It is an interesting fact that in the Convocation of 1562, the proctors of the Clergy of Suffolk and Norwich, Walker and Roberts, both subscribed a paper seeking reformation in the puritan sense ; and that on the 13th of February, the articles which they and others presented for securing this reformation were only rejected by the proxies of absentees, and then only by a majority of one—so nearly were the contending parties in the Church at that time balanced.

It is evident that the history of Puritanism in any particular district would be greatly affected by the character and spirit of the Bishop. In attempting, therefore, to trace that history in this diocese it will be convenient to regard it under the occupants of the Episcopal throne, as they successively present themselves to us.

I. DR. JOHN PARKHURST, 1560-1574.

The bishopric of Norwich was first offered to Dr. Cox, who had been the instigator of " the troubles at Frankfort," but, happily for the district, he declined to accept the office, and it was eventually conferred upon Dr. John Parkhurst, who had been domestic chaplain to Queen Catherine Parr, tutor to Bishop Jewell, and rector of Clive. During the reign of Mary he was an exile in Switzerland. The order and discipline of the reformed Church there so commended themselves to him, that he often expressed the wish that the Church of England had been similarly modelled. He sympathised with the Puritans, and never willingly entered into any measures of severity against them, in consequence of which he was distrusted by the Queen. By command of his superiors he was forced sometimes to act in a way contrary to his judgment, but his influence contributed not a little to mitigate the rigour of royal and archiepiscopal rule ; yet notwithstanding his

clemency, many faithful ministers in these two counties were silenced.

In the year in which the Act of Uniformity was passed, 1559, the Queen issued a "Book of Injunctions" as well to the clergy as to the laity of this realm, commanding conformity in the matter of attire, insisting that all "that be admitted into vocation ecclesiastical shall use and wear such seemly habits, garments, and such square caps as were most commonly and orderly received in the reign of King Edward the Sixth. The Puritans objected to the use of the surplice as a garment peculiar to the Papal Church, and symbolical of priestly claims or pretentions.

This unconquerable repugnance to the habits on the part of the Puritans led, in 1564, to the issue of "Advertisements," by which it was ordained that "all licenses for preaching, granted out by the Archbishop and Bishops within the province of Canterbury, bearing the date before the first day of March, 1564, be void and of none effect": by this ordinance *all* preachers were silenced. And then to complete the work it was further ordained that only "such as be thought meet for the office" should be admitted again; by this only conformable ministers were restored.

Shortly after the issuing of these "Advertisements" the first Puritans were deprived, as Coverdale, Bale, Fox, Sampson, etc.; and the result of the enforcement of their provisions was the separation of 1566.

By the year 1570 many of the faithful pastors of Norfolk and Suffolk had been ejected from their livings, and so severe were the persecutions of the ruling clergy, that the Parliament of 1571, moved with pity, interposed and passed an act, the tendency of which was to relieve the Puritans, by which every minister ordained otherwise than is declared by the form in use in the Church of England, was to "declare his assent and subscribe to all the articles of Religion which only concern the confession of the true Christian faith and the doctrine of the Sacraments." But the high ecclesiastics insisted upon more than the Act required, and many excellent men were deprived in consequence.

The sympathies of the Queen were with the high ecclesiastics—nay, she said she hated the Puritans more than the Papists, and she checked all further reformation by the exercise of her supremacy. She repressed all evangelical reformation, and by her severities endeavoured to extinguish all who advocated it. In this effort she was subserviently aided by her bishops, some of whom, while they sympathised with the Puritans, yet persecuted them, and this they did because of the reverence they felt for the royal supremacy, and the fear they entertained of "Her Majesty's high displeasure," and of the other censures threatened. Even Parkhurst himself

was obliged to yield to her arbitrary will and that of the Archbishop, though he did it with reluctance. It is somewhat pitiable to read his apology for his attitude to the Puritans. "I was obliged," he says, "to restrain them unless I would willingly procure my own danger. Therefore let not this matter seem strange to you, for it was of importance and touched me so near that I could do no less if I would avoid extreme danger." Something like 300 faithful ministers, who refused to conform to the command of Queen and bishops for the wearing of vestments, were suspended in this diocese; many of whom, as Parkhurst declared, were godly and learned men and had done much good.

The closing days of the good old Bishop were embittered by these conflicts with ecclesiastical and royal authority, and towards the close of 1574 he passed away, "universally beloved, honoured, and esteemed by his whole diocese."*

II. DR. EDMUND FREEKE, 1575-1584.

Dr. Edmund Freeke, who succeeded Parkhurst, was translated from Rochester to Norwich in 1575. This prelate was a man of a very different spirit from his predecessor, and very soon showed the nature of the course he intended to pursue. He resolved to carry out, to its uttermost, the Queen's late proclamation, and in his first visitation many good men were suspended, and by his unchristian severity he provoked a severe rebuke from one who had suffered. One, R. Harvey, a Puritan minister, had spoken against the hierarchical government of the Church; he was summoned to appear before the Bishop and was immediately suspended; the Dean who pronounced the sentence violated all the decencies of a professedly Christian court, and Mr. Harvey, as a man and a Christian minister, felt himself greatly aggrieved by the treatment he had received. He wrote a letter in which he strongly protested against the arrogance and assumption of the Bishop.†

Bishop Freeke administered the ecclesiastical law with the utmost rigour. In all parts of his diocese ministers were suspended or ejected at his will, and were subjected to such divers persecutions that in the year 1582 the Justices of the Peace of the County of Suffolk were so disturbed by the course the Bishop was pursuing, that they wrote to the Lords of the Council praying them to interpose on behalf of divers godly ministers exposed to fierce persecution.

The effect of this appeal or remonstrance was a letter from the Council to the Judges of Assize commanding them not to give ear to malicious informers against peaceful and faithful ministers; nor to match themselves at the bar with rogues, felons, and papists;

* Thomas Bacon.

† For complete copy of this letter see I. Browne's *Nonconformity*, p. 21.

but to put a difference in the face of the world between those of another faith and those who differ only about ceremonies, and yet diligently and soundly preach true religion. But this rebuff offended the prelates.*

A little while after, in 1583, the Norwich laity memorialized the Queen, praying for a further reformation in the Presbyterian direction. The practical answer to this appeal was given in the appointment of Whitgift to the See of Canterbury. As soon as he was seated on his throne Whitgift began in obedience to the Queen's injunction to make war upon the Puritans. The first week of his Archbishopial rule he issued his famous articles.

1. That all preaching, catechizing, and praying in any private family, where are any present beside the family, be utterly extinguished.

2. That none to teach or catechize, except also he will read the whole service, and administer the Sacraments four times a year.

3. That all preachers and others in ecclesiastical orders do at all times wear the habits prescribed.

4. That none be admitted to preach unless he be ordained according to the manner of the Church of England.

5. That none be admitted to preach, or execute any part of the ecclesiastical function unless he subscribe the following articles :

i. That the Queen hath and ought to have sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons, born within her dominions, of what condition soever they be ; and that none other power or potentate hath, or ought to have, any power ecclesiastical or civil within her realms or dominions.

ii. That the Book of Common Prayer, and of ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God, but may be lawfully used ; and that he himself will use the same and none other, in public prayer and administration of Sacraments.

iii. That he alloweth the Book of Articles agreed upon in the convocation holden in London in 1562, and set forth by Her Majesty's authority ; and he believe all the articles therein contained to be agreeable to the Word of God.

In Bishop Freeke the Archbishop found a man after his own heart, ready to carry out his behests at whatever cost. But he soon found there were men in Norfolk and Suffolk who looked to a higher authority than Queen or Bishop for their direction and marching orders. In Norfolk there were 64 ministers "not resolved to subscribe," and in Suffolk 60.

* Neal I., 260.

Hitherto we have been describing the persecutions to which the Puritans were exposed. These men were, in the main, still adherents of the Church of England. Their objections were mainly to the papistical portions of the English service book, and earnestly desired the establishment of such a ministry and discipline as existed in the church of Calvin. If they could have obtained the abrogation of the offensive rites and ceremonies of the Established Church; and if they could have introduced into it the elements of Presbyterian government, they would have been satisfied, and would then have compelled all others to submit to the authority of the Church thus reformed according to their ideas.

But there were some men in those days who felt the imposition to be intolerable; and further they thought that Christian ministers should resist them, and preach the Word of God in spite of them, and that the laity should hear the word and receive the sacraments apart from them. These were the early Independents or Congregationalists. The mere Puritan had no love for the Separatists, as we find from another "Supplication of the Ministers of Norfolk to the Lords in Council," in which they speak of it as to their own credit, that they "have not maintained any division or separation from the Church . . . and have resisted with all their power . . . both Papists and other heretics, and the late schismatics of the faction of Browne."

It will not fail to strike the reader that the relative position of the old Puritan and Separatist, was as nearly as possible that now occupied by the Evangelical clergyman and the Congregational dissenter. Nor was this feeling of antagonism confined to the Puritan clergy; the laity also sympathised in this opposition to the Separatists. "The gentlemen of Norfolk," in their letter "to the Council on behalf of their Ministers," say:—

"Sundry of these preachers have much laboured against the faction of Browne, and therein have done exceeding great good in our county, so as at this present very few are noted to be of the same evil opinion." Signed, Henry Cromwell, Wm. Hendon, Ed. Clere, Natha. Bacon, John Perton.*

It is the history of these despised and maligned Brownists that now claims our attention; and we shall have to show that the Puritans mistook their character, and were deceived in their estimate of the vitality of the principles which the Brownists maintained.

* MS. Register.

CHAPTER III.

CONGREGATIONALISM.

If Bishop Freeke was severe in his treatment of the Puritans, there was a class of Christian men in his diocese against whom he was furious. It was during this episcopate that the opinions of Robert Browne came into notoriety. The severe measures which had been resorted to in order to repress the Puritan clergy produced a revulsion in the mind of many, who even went the length of denying that the Church of England was a true church; they therefore separated themselves altogether from her communion.

We shall first set forth the distinctive principles of these Separatists, and then call attention to the man who first in these later times introduced them to popular notice; and afterwards relate some of the sorrows which those who embraced them had to endure.

I. THE PRINCIPLES.

“The Church planted or gathered is a company or number of Christians or believers, which by a willing covenant made with their God, are under the government of God and Christ, and keep His laws in one holy communion.”

“The Church government is the Lordship of Christ in the communion of His offices; whereby His people obey to His will, and have mutual use of their graces and callings to further their godliness and welfare.”*

This is the first formal definition of a Congregational Church; we do not say it is the best, but it has a claim to a place here because of the fact that it was the first attempt in later times to exhibit the principles which Congregationalists espouse. They emphasized the two great truths which we regard as fundamental, viz., the headship of Jesus Christ, and the autonomy of the Church.

It is true these principles were much older than the days of Browne. They are as old as Christianity itself; they are the principles upon which the Church in Apostolic times was based and built. For many ages they were obscured and practically lost

* Robert Browne, 1582. Life and Manners of all Christians.

under the accumulations of sacerdotalism ; but no sooner was the Word of God read generally than they began to re-assert their power.

We cannot tell when these principles first re-appeared. There are distinct traces of them in the reign of Edward VI., but it was not till towards the middle of the reign of Elizabeth that they laid claim to public attention, and when they did so they were everywhere spoken against. The seed had fallen into the minds of some and into the hearts of others, and accordingly it was developed ; in the former case into a theory, in the latter case into a consistent practice. We say the seed fell into the *minds only* of some, because unhappily the first man who publicly advocated the theory fell far short of realizing it in a consistent life, and by his inconsistencies brought dishonour on the cause. Still, notwithstanding all this, the principles themselves remain the most valued heritage of the Christian Church. These principles were : that every properly constituted church is a strictly voluntary society instituted for purely religious purposes, and regulated by laws and sanctions altogether religious ; that its members should be limited to persons making a credible profession of the Christian faith, and that its proceedings, as being moral and religious only, should be exempt from any control of the civil magistrate on the one hand or of the secular power committed to the ruling clergy on the other ; that the persons who officiate as their teachers and pastors and the deacons or elders who manage their pecuniary affairs, should be chosen from among themselves ; that whilst they look for security against civil wrong to the civil magistrate, they should exercise discipline in their own community only by brotherly reproof, or exclusion from fellowship in cases of disorderly conduct ; and that the Holy Scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith and practice.

Ecclesiastically and politically those who advocated these views were regarded as schismatics and rebels, and their early history is one of sorrow and suffering which we of a later time can scarcely conceive. Those sufferings are not generally known because historians for the most part ignore the men and treat them as mere fanatics and unworthy of notice. But they are the men to whom more than to any other class, England owes her strong position among the nations of the world.

II. THE PREACHER.

Robert Browne, who is generally regarded as the father of modern Congregationalism, was the son of Anthony Browne, of Tolethorpe, in Rutlandshire, "of ancient and right worshipped extraction." He became a student of Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, then master of the Free School, St. Olave's, Southwark, and Chaplain

to the Duke of Norfolk. At Cambridge he was associated with men who diligently examined the Scriptures, and was a preacher of some considerable reputation ; and here, in all probability, he received the germs of the truth which was afterwards developed into a consistent system of ecclesiastical polity. He was born about, or just before, the middle of the sixteenth century. As a boy he would know something of the fierce persecution of Protestants in the reign of Mary ; and as a youth would be stirred by the trials and troubles of the early Puritans. Such events as were passing before him naturally led him to inquire into the origin and nature of Church power ; and his study of the Word of God led him to reject absolutely all the claims of the hierarchy and to espouse the principles of Congregational Independency. In June, 1571, whilst still a young man, he was cited to appear, with several Puritans, before Archbishop Whitgift ; the Duke of Norfolk made strong intercession for him, and being related to the Lord Treasurer, Burleigh, that nobleman's power protected him for the time.

The next ten years of his life are historically a blank, but we are sure they were not spent in idleness. We find him next associated with some Dutch emigrants in Norfolk, with whom he continued about a year, teaching and preaching and propagating his opinions.

He was apprehended in the latter part of the year 1580, or the beginning of 1581, and brought before the ecclesiastical authorities in this diocese, and we are informed by the Bishop himself that this was done "upon complaint made by many godly preachers, for delivering unto the people corrupt and contentious doctrine contained and set down more at large," in a copy of "Articles ministered against him," to which he had been required to make answer. As the result of his trial he was imprisoned for some time.

His appearance and bearing on this occasion seem to have greatly impressed the Bishop (Freeke), who says in his letter to Lord Burleigh, April 19th, 1581 :—

"His arrogant spirit of reproving being such as is to be marvelled at ; the man being also to be feared, lest, if he were at liberty, he would seduce the vulgar sort of the people, who greatly depend upon him, assembling themselves to the number of a hundred at a time, in private houses, and conventicles, to hear him not without danger to some thereabout."

From this brief letter it is evident that the principles which Browne was inculcating were striking their roots deep in the soil of the countryside. In "private houses and conventicles" little communities met together for the free study of the Scriptures and the untrammelled worship of God. Many efforts were made to suppress or uproot this new form of heresy, but in vain, for the more its supporters were persecuted the more they multiplied and grew.

During Browne's imprisonment Lord Burleigh, his kinsman, interposed in his behalf, to secure his liberty. No sooner was he out of prison than he returned to his old purpose of holding private meetings for the dissemination of his principles. The Bishop is greatly perturbed, is powerless to check the spread of these opinions, and actually fears that the whole diocese will be disturbed thereby. An earnest appeal was issued by the Bishop to the Lord Treasurer to use his great influence with Browne to arrest the spread of these "pernicious doctrines."

Listening, probably, to Burleigh's counsels, Browne left the country, for we find him almost directly with friends in the island of Zealand, where they constituted themselves into a church, and he then published his doctrines in "A book which sheweth the Life and Manners of all true Christians; and how unlike they are unto Turks and Papists, and Heathen folk. Also the points and parts of all Divinity, etc." Middleburg, 1582. In the same year he published a book, entitled "A Treatise of Reformation without tarrying for any, and of the wickedness of those preachers who will not reform them and their charge, because they will tarry till the magistrates command and compel them." By me Robert Browne.

Meanwhile, dissensions arising in the church at Middleburg, Browne retreated with some of his followers to Scotland in 1584; here also he got into trouble, was committed to "ward and there detained a night or two till he was tried," but the court took him under its protection and encouraged him because of his "exclaiming against the ministers and calling in question their authority." In 1585 he returned to England, and was cited before the authorities to answer for his treatises; but no proof being found that he was an accessory to their dispersion he was dismissed.

He then went to his father's house, but Fuller says "that he would not own him for a son who would not own the Church of England for his mother." He travelled up and down the country preaching against the laws and ceremonies of the Church, and then settled at Northampton, where his preaching gave offence, and he was cited before the Bishop of Peterborough, who, upon his refusing to appear, publicly excommunicated him for contempt. This censure, it is said, made such an impression upon him that he renounced his principles of separation, and having obtained absolution he was, about the year 1592, preferred to the rectory of Achurch in Northamptonshire. But though as a wandering sheep he had been restored to the fold, he was no great credit to the Church which had thus received him to its ministry again. Fuller, who knew him, did not "believe that he ever formally recanted his opinions, either by word or writing, as to the main of what he maintained"; and one, "S.B.," writing in 1588, was of the same

opinion, for he says : " Browne cunningly counterfeiteth conformity, and dissembleth with his own soul, for liberty." Not only was his sincerity doubted, but his moral character was strongly impugned ; for Fuller says " he had a wife with whom he never lived, a church in which he never preached, and as all the other scenes of his life were stormy and troubled, so was his end." For being poor and proud, and very passionate, he struck the constable of his parish for demanding payment of certain rates ; and being beloved by nobody the officer summoned him before Sir Rowland St. John, a neighbouring justice, in whose presence he behaved with so much insolence that he was committed to Northampton jail. The decrepit old man, not being able to walk, was carried thither upon a feather bed in a cart. There, not long after, he sickened and died, in 1630, aged upwards of eighty years, boasting " that he had been committed to thirty-two prisons, in some of which he could not see his hand at noon-day."

Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory character of Browne and his later supposed repudiation of views held and propagated in earlier life, he did a work greater than he knew, the results of which were seen in after days. He was the sower of seed from which subsequent generations have been reaping the harvest.

III. PERSECUTION.

About the same time that Bishop Freeke was persecuting Browne, he was instituting proceedings against those who held his opinions in Bury St. Edmunds. He writes, April 19th, 1581 :—

" Being informed of many disorders in the town of Bury and country thereabout, as well in the clergy as in the laity ; whereof, besides the general complaint, the High Commissioners at Bury, understanding of the same disorders, advertised me thereof by letters, requiring me to take order therein, I did of late in person, with others of my associates in Commission Ecclesiastical for these parts, visit the said town. In the which finding great divisions among the people, some of whom are very desirous in dutiful affection to have her Majesty's proceedings observed, others, on the contrary, being given to fantastical innovations ; there were, moreover, divers matters of importance exhibited and proved against Mr. Handson, who is, in very deed, the only man there blowing the coals whereof this fire is kindled. It was therefore thought meet, for the better quiet of that place, that he should be suspended from preaching, unless he could be contented to enter into bond to her Majesty's use hereafter to preach the Word sincerely and purely, without impugning or inveighing against the Communion Book, the order of government, and the law of this realm now established. Which offer

refusing, he was and is thereupon inhibited to preach. Whereof I have thought good not only to inform your Lordship, but also the rest of my Lords of the Council, if as it should like your Lordship. Wherein this bearer is to attend and follow your Lordship's directions; having for your and their Lordship's better information, sent herewith a copy of the article and proof thereof preferred against Mr. Handson, referring the procedure therein taken to your Lordship's judgment and consideration."*

He not only complains of Mr. Handson, but of some of the leading laity of the district, and in another letter says :

"If it would please your Lordship to give me some good advice, how to prevent such dangers as through the strange dealings of some of the gentlemen in Suffolk about Bury is like to ensue, I should be much bound to your honour for the same; which gentlemen in winking at, if not of policy procuring the disordered sort to go forward in their evil attempts, and discouraging the staid and wiser sort of preachers—as by sundry letters which I send your Lordship by this bringer may appear more plainly unto your honour—will in time, I fear me, hazard the overthrow of all religion if it be not in due time wisely prevented."

"Edmund Norwich."

"Ludham, August 2nd, 1581."

The above quotations will give an idea of the state of things at Bury in 1581. Reports and complaints had called the Bishop thither; he found the clergy and laity breaking loose from episcopal restraint, and "fantastical innovations" advocated. In other words he found Brownism working like leaven in the meal, and even the gentlemen in the neighbourhood encouraging it.

This John Handson, to whom reference is made in the Bishop's letter, as the prime mover in the revolt against episcopacy, was curate of St. James', Bury St. Edmunds. In 1573 he had been examined by the Bishop's Chancellor on account of Puritan irregularities, and had now become tainted with Brownist opinions; he was, therefore, brought before the Bishop, examined, and imprisoned. He had for his companions Tyler, Copping, and Thacker; the two latter had been incarcerated for circulating Browne's books. When they complained to the justices of the quarter sessions of their long and illegal imprisonment, their worships interceded with the Bishops in their favour. Whereupon his Lordship "drew up twelve articles of impeachment against the justices themselves," and caused them to be summoned before the Queen's Council to answer for their misdemeanors. They were charged with countenancing the prisoners and other disorderly

* Part of a letter to Lord Burleigh from Bishop Freck. Landsdowne MSS.

clergymen ; and with contempt of his Lordship's jurisdiction in refusing to admit divers ministers whom he had ordained, because they were ignorant and could only read ; and with removing one Wood from his living on the same account. Sir Robert Jermin, and Sir John Higham, Knights, and Robert Ashfield and Thomas Badley, esquires, gentlemen of Suffolk and Norfolk, being of the number of the said justices, gave in their answer to the Bishop's articles in the name of the rest ; in which after asserting their own conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the Church, they very justly tax his Lordship with cruelty in keeping men so many years in prison, without bringing them to trial according to law ; and are ashamed that a Bishop of the Church of England should be a patron of ignorance, and an enemy to the preaching of the Word of God. Upon this the justices were dismissed. When, therefore, the Lord Treasurer, Lord North, Sir Robert Jermin, and others wrote to the Bishop requesting that Mr. Handson, who was a learned and useful preacher, might have a licence granted him, the angry prelate declared peremptorily that he never should have one unless he would acknowledge his faults, and enter into bonds for his good behaviour in the future. But worse was the fate of his two fellow prisoners. John Copping, who had been a minister near Bury, was brought before the Commissary of the Bishop of Norwich in the year 1576, and for certain Puritan opinions, which his judges called false and malicious, was imprisoned seven years, Elias Thacker, another old Broomist was imprisoned with him. At the end of the time they were indicted, tried, and condemned for denying the Queen's supremacy, and for having circulated Browne's books. This was called sedition, and both of them were hanged at Bury in June, 1583. About the same time William Dennis, a Separatist, was put to death at Thetford for his opinions. So gently did the ruling ecclesiastics exercise their pastoral authority. These men were the Proto-martyrs of Independency.

It is not the purpose of this book to follow the storm of persecution which swept over many parts of England in this period. Suffice it to say that wherever the spirit of Independency manifested itself it was suppressed with ruthless cruelty. Laws were framed, and administered with the utmost rigour. That the reader may gather some idea of the intense hostility of the hierarchy to all who ventured to think and act for themselves, and in accordance with the dictates of conscience, it is only necessary to recall an Act of Parliament, passed in 1592, entitled " An act for the punishment of persons obstinately refusing to come to Church." Its object was utterly to extinguish the Brownists and Separatists, who had by this time increased to a considerable number. It decreed that " All persons above the age of sixteen refusing to come to Church, or persuading

others to deny her Majesty's authority in causes ecclesiastical, or dissuading them from coming to Church, or being found present in any conventicle or meeting under pretence of religion, shall upon conviction be committed to prison without bail till they shall conform and come to Church"; and that should they refuse to recant "within three months they shall abjure the realm and go into perpetual banishment; and that if they do not depart within the time appointed, or if they ever return without the Queen's license, they shall suffer death without the benefit of clergy." During the debates which preceded the passing of this Act, Sir Walter Raleigh declared his conviction that the Brownists at that time were not less than twenty thousand, divided into several congregations in Norfolk and Essex, and in the parts about London.

It was not long before proceedings were taken under the Act, and Henry Barrow,* who had taken the place of Browne, was one of the first victims. He and Greenwood and Penry were imprisoned, with many more holding the same opinions. After suffering fearful privations, Barrow and Greenwood were brought in a cart to Tyburn on the last day of March, to see if the terrors of death would affright them and induce them to recant; and this failing, they were on the 6th of April following again conveyed thither and executed. Penry was hanged on May 29th, 1593.

Till the close of the reign of Elizabeth, severities against the Puritans and Separatists continued, and it was supposed that these severities had effectually subdued the power and diminished the number of the Nonconformists, but whether they really had done so the sequel will show.

Elizabeth died March 24th, 1603. Her reign of forty-four years was one long weary pilgrimage of sorrow and suffering for those who endeavoured to advance the principles of evangelical religion and scriptural reformation, and to resist the backward tendency towards Ritualism and Romanism manifested by the ruling hierarchy.

* Henry Barrow was the third son of Thomas Barrow, Esq., of Shipdam, in Norfolk. His mother, Mary Bures, was daughter and co-heiress of Henry Bures, of Acton, Suffolk. Henry was born about the year 1550, and in 1566 entered Cambridge. He matriculated at Clare Hall as a fellow commoner, and graduated in 1569-70. In 1576 he was a member of Gray's Inn. At first a profligate, he afterwards was brought under the power of religion, and on examination, became dissatisfied with the principles of the Church established, and wrote against them. Those who sympathised with him were called Barrowists, which was only one of the names by which the Separatists were known. In November, 1586, he and John Greenwood, clerk, were convened before the High Commissioners for causes ecclesiastical, charged with holding schismatical and seditious opinions, which were simply the opinions in Church government of the Brownists.

For full account of Barrow see Dr. Powick's interesting book, "Henry Barrow and the exiled Church of Amsterdam."

CHAPTER IV.

SOWING THE WIND.

IN 1603 James I. ascended the throne of England. From his Scottish antecedents the Puritans expected that they should now obtain some relief; but these expectations were doomed to disappointment. James, when King of Scotland only, had "praised God that he was born to be king of the purest Kirk in the world," and had been so irreverent as to declare that the English service was an "evil said mass, wanting nothing but the liftings." He had also said other things which appeared to be in exact harmony with the views of the Puritans, and it was but natural that they should hope for a favourable reply to the petition which above a thousand of them presented to him on his first coming to England. They represented themselves as "groaning under the burden of human rites and ceremonies, and with one consent they threw themselves at his royal feet for a reformation in the Church Service, ministry, livings, and discipline."

A Conference was appointed to be held at Hampton Court, January 14th—17th, 1603-4, professedly to give due consideration to these matters. On the first day the King and the Episcopal party went alone over all the ground, and settled what was to be done. The next day four Puritan ministers, Dr. Rainolds, Dr. Sparke, Mr. Chatterdon, and Mr. Knewstubs*, were called into the Privy Council Chamber, "the two Bishops of London and Winchester being there before," when, after some preliminary oratory, Dr. Rainolds was called upon to state the case for the petitioners. They desired

1. That the doctrine of the Church might be preserved in purity according to God's word.
2. That good Pastors might be planted in all Churches to preach the same.
3. That the Church government might be sincerely administered according to God's Word.
4. That the Book of Common Prayer might be fitted to more increase of piety.

* Mr. Knewstubs was from Cockfield.

Dr. Rainolds explained and enforced the Puritan objections, and, with many unseemly interruptions from the King and Bishops, continued the unequal contest for some hours, and then Mr. Knewstubs came to his aid and took up the subject for a while, the Doctor afterwards resuming the debate.

On the third day the King and Bishops had the Conference at first to themselves, and after they had settled matters the four Puritans were again called in and told what had been decided. The King gave them to understand that "obedience and humility were marks of honest and good men ; those he expected of them, and, by their example and persuasion, of all their sort abroad ; for if hereafter," said he, "things being thus well ordered, they should be unquiet, neither he nor the state had any cause to think well of them."

Mr. Chatterton requested that the wearing of the surplice, and the use of the cross in baptism, might not be urged upon some painful ministers in Lancashire ; and then Mr. Knewstubs requested forbearance also for some honest ministers in Suffolk, telling the King it would make much against their credit in the country to be now forced to the surplice and the cross in baptism. My Lord's Grace (Whitgift) was about to answer—

"Nay," saith his Majesty, "let me alone with him. Sir," saith the King, "you show yourself an uncharitable man ; we have here taken pains, and in the end have concluded of an unity and uniformity ; and you, forsooth, must prefer the credits of a few private men, before the general peace of the Church. This is just the Scots argument ; for when anything was there concluded, which disliked some humours, the only reason why they would not obey was, it stood not with their credits to yield, having so long time been of contrary opinion. I will none of that," saith the King, "and therefore, let them either conform themselves, and that shortly, or they shall hear of it."*

Thus royally were the questions settled which had troubled the conscience of hundreds of faithful ministers in the Church ; and now said the King "If this be all your party have to say, I will make them conform, or I will harry them out of the land, or else do worse."

Browbeaten and disappointed, they were taught the lesson, "Put not your trust in princes !" They departed from the presence of the Council, if not rejoicing, yet thankful that "they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus." The obsequious Archbishop Whitgift, who protested that "he was verily persuaded the King, at this conference, spoke by the Spirit of God," did not long survive ; he died February 29th, 1603-4.

* Phenix I., 139-180.

But meanwhile he had cited seven ministers before him and suspended them ; and they were cited to appear before him again on the day on which he died. His successor was Richard Bancroft, a more unrelenting persecutor than Whitgift, as the Puritans soon found to their cost. He was "a sturdy piece," and "resolved to break them if they would not bow." Who could stand against such a man of such a spirit armed with authority ? During the six years he occupied the Archiepiscopal throne he deprived, silenced, and admonished above three hundred ministers.

After the conference it was found that there were seventy-one Suffolk ministers and twenty-eight ministers in Norfolk who could not subscribe.

Whilst some of the Puritans were petitioning a pedantic King, and attending a mock conference which was never intended to result in any measure of relief to tender consciences, others were developing into Christians of a stronger and perhaps a sterner type.

In 1604, the Constitutions and Canons of the Church were settled in convocation, and, without receiving the assent of Parliament, were issued on the strength alone of the Royal Supremacy. The Ecclesiastical authorities and the High Commission Court decided questions affecting the liberties and prosperity of the people according to these Canons. These Canons dealt with a great number of subjects, including the Supremacy of the King, Apostolical succession, Schism and the punishment of Schismatics. All of them were evidently framed with a view of persecuting and suppressing Puritans and Separatists.*

These Canons, be it remembered, were issued by Convocation without the consent of Parliament. Yet Bancroft and the Court clergy pressed them so severely upon the Puritans that at length Parliament aroused to a sense of its duty, interfered on their behalf. In the session of 1610 "it was a matter of loud complaint that the prelates should have 'deprived, disgraced, silenced, and imprisoned' so many of the Puritan clergy, who were described as 'God's messengers,' and as eminent benefactors to their country, in contempt of the efforts made in the lower house to prevent such courses ; it was declared that the conformity required was such as the legislature had never enjoined, and such as could not, therefore, be legally enforced. A petition was presented, which stated that :

"Whereas divers learned and painful pastors that have long travailed in the work of the ministry, with good fruit and blessing of their labour, who were ever ready to perform the legal subscription, appointed by the thirteenth of Elizabeth, which only concerned the confession of the true Christian faith, and doctrine

* These Canons are still in force, and are the constitutional laws of the Church of England at the present day !

of Sacraments, yet, for not conforming in some points of ceremonies, and for refusing subscription to the late canons, have been removed from their ecclesiastical livings, being their freehold, and debarred from all means of maintenance, to the great grief of your Majesty's subjects, seeing the whole people that want instruction lie open to the seducement of Popish and ill-affected persons; we therefore most humbly beseech your Majesty that such deprived and silenced ministers may, by license or permission of the reverend fathers in their several dioceses, instruct and preach unto their people in such parishes and places where they may be employed, so as they apply themselves in their ministry to wholesome doctrine and exhortation, and live quietly and peaceably in their calling, and shall not by writing or preaching, impugn things established by public authority."

From the above it would appear that the Puritans are not to be regarded as a mere faction, but as a body of clergymen possessing the confidence of the representatives of the nation in Parliament; that their desires were to exercise their ministry in accordance with the laws; and that the power which oppressed them was an ecclesiastical tyranny. The struggle in which they were engaged was part of that greater struggle which continued throughout the Stuart dynasty—the struggle between law and prerogative on the one hand, and liberty and national slavery on the other.

It is well at this point to distinguish between the Puritans and the Separatists, a distinction which is often overlooked by students of the history of the period. Whilst the Separatists were all Puritan in spirit and principle, the Puritans were far from being all Separatists. The majority of the Puritans remarried within the Church, and, to a certain extent, acknowledged the King's Supremacy. They have been charged with some amount of inconsistency in the course they thus pursued. They felt themselves to be in a dilemma; they could not exercise their ministry without resisting the Supremacy on the one hand, or coming out of the establishment on the other; and for this latter they were not prepared. They therefore dared the former.

But there were other men who were prepared to go to any length and to bear any suffering, rather than trifle with their consciences; men who claimed their rights as Christian freemen, denied the supremacy, refused to submit to the yoke of bondage, and so laid the foundation broad and deep of that larger religious liberty which we enjoy. The Brownists or Separatists were the men who dared to carry out their convictions to their logical conclusions. They sought not their justification in the scruples of the Puritans, but in their firmer grasp of doctrine implied in the words of their Master:

“ Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s ” ; a doctrine diametrically opposed to that of the royal supremacy over all persons and causes, civil and ecclesiastical, making a clear distinction between the obedience due to the civil ruler and the obedience due to the Lord of conscience and the King of kings. They therefore hesitated not to act in opposition to those canons and ordinances which they believed to be contrary to the word and will of God. They suffered the penalty of their daring like Christians, like heroes, like martyrs, and laid the foundation of a free republic on one side of the Atlantic, and of a free monarchy on the other. Their principles, like the leaven, are working still, quietly yet surely, and will continue to work until the whole Church shall be leavened and free !

In the early years of the 17th Century a number of men, who, for their great learning and scholarship, their nobility of spirit, and virility of character, stand out in bold relief, and have shed a glory upon their own and succeeding ages. Many of these were East Anglians, or intimately connected with East Anglia. A brief reference to some of these men will not be out of place at this point in our studies. Foremost among these pioneers of religious liberty stands John Robinson, M.A. This great man was born 1575, probably in Lincolnshire or Nottinghamshire, was educated at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he was admitted in 1592, and obtained a fellowship in 1598, which he retained till 1604. Brought into contact with Mr. William Perkins, he became, by the grace of God, a converted man whilst yet a member of the English Church ; and at the close of his University course he came into Norfolk and began his public ministry in the neighbourhood of Norwich. At what place it is not known ; probably he was a preacher not beneficed, and therefore it is not likely that his name will be found in official records. He was, however, a Puritan, and therefore suspended by the Bishop, whereupon he retired to Norwich, and collected a congregation of Puritan worshippers there, who were greatly disturbed and afflicted by the Bishop’s officers, as Ainsworth, in his “ Counter-poyson,” tells us.

“ Witness,” says he, “ the late practice in Norwich, where certain citizens were excommunicated for resorting unto and praying with Mr. Robinson, a man worthily revered of all the city for the grace of God in him Hereby all may see what small hope there is of curing the canker in your Church.”

He wished, if possible, to retain his connexion with the Establishment, and long resisted the conviction that his position was untenable, so that he says :

“ Had not the truth been in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones (Jer. xx., 9) I had never broken these bonds of

flesh and blood, wherein I was so straitly tied, but had suffered the light of God to have been put out in mine own unthankful heart by other men's darkness."

Hopeless with respect to further ecclesiastical reformation, and convinced that all attempts at harmonizing his scriptural views with canonical law "were vain," and subject to the suspicions, informations, and oppressions of the dominant party, he solemnly resolved, and "on most sound and irresistible convictions," to carry out his Puritanical principles to their utmost consequences, and to separate himself altogether from the Church of his youth and affections.*

He left Norwich virtually a Separatist, resigned his fellowship at Cambridge in 1604, and joined himself to a Church in Lincolnshire, which had, about 1602, covenanted with the Lord, and with each other, "to walk in all His ways made known, or to be made known unto them, according to their best endeavours, whatever it should cost them."

Of this church Messrs. Smyth and Clayton were pastors ; but in consequence of the increase in their number, it was found desirable to found two distinct societies in different places ; Mr. Smyth and Mr. Clayton were chosen pastors of the respective churches. Mr. Robinson attached himself to Mr. Clayton's church, was shortly afterwards chosen his assistant in the ministry, and then, on Mr. Clayton's removal to Holland, became sole pastor of the church. The church ordinarily met in Mr. Brewster's house at Scrooby, within the borders of Nottinghamshire, and was the spring of that river the streams whereof have made glad a district which was once a savage wilderness, but is now "the place of the tabernacles of the Most High" ; and the names of Scrooby, Brewster, and Robinson will never fade from the minds and hearts of the men of New England.

Smyth's party reached Holland in 1606, and Clayton's shortly after ; and both settled in a church under the care of Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth.

Wearied with the persecutions at home, Robinson and the rest of his flock, resolved to leave their native land, and made arrangements so to do ; but they had to pass through many perils and sorrows before their object was accomplished. At length, in 1608, Mr. Robinson and his friends arrived in Holland ; they first joined themselves with their former friends in Amsterdam ; but, as they had lost all their possessions in their flight, and it was necessary to settle where they could get a living, they removed to Leyden in 1609. There they enjoyed the blessing of religious liberty, and,

*Ashton's Life.

with the leave of the magistrates, hired a meeting house and worshipped God publicly in their own way.

Mr. Robinson at first was a rigid Brownist ; but intercourse with others, especially with Dr. Ames, moderated his views ; and so, whilst contending for the necessity of separation, he would not deny the reformed churches to be true churches, nor refuse to receive their members to communion. His ecclesiastical opinions may be gathered from the following extract :—

“ This we hold and affirm that a company consisting of but two or three gathered by a covenant to walk in all the ways of God, is a church, and so hath the whole power of Christ. Two or three thus gathered together have the same right with two or three thousand ; neither the smallness of their numbers, nor the meanness of their persons, can prejudice their rights.”

He allowed also the expediency of councils of reference for reconciling differences among churches, by giving them friendly advice ; but not for exercising any act of authority whatever, without the free consent of the churches themselves. It is not our purpose to trace the whole course of this great and good man who, on account of the changes he effected in the system of Browne, and on account of the moderation he shewed in carrying out the principles he entertained, has fitly been styled the Father of modern Congregationalism. We shall, therefore, only say that, in 1615, he was admitted a member of the University of Leyden ; shortly after which, for various pressing reasons, the church made arrangements to leave the city which had so hospitably received them, and, eventually, on July 22nd, 1620, a part of the church embarked in the Speedwell for Southampton, and there embarked on board the Mayflower, September 6th, which landed them in America, on Plymouth Rock, November 11th, the same year.

The circumstances connected with the embarkation in Holland were svery simple and affecting. Mr. Robinson preached from Ezra viii., 21, 22 ; and one who heard him has recorded the following noble sentiment as having been uttered by him on that occasion :

“ He charged us before God and His blessed angels to follow him no further than he followed Christ ; and if God should reveal anything to us by any other instrument of His, to be as ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry ; for he was very confident the Lord had more light and truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.”

The whole address is worthy of being reproduced here, but this must suffice ; and it is to be noted that most of the congregational Church covenants hereafter mentioned are conceived in the spirit of this address.

Mr. Robinson did not sail with this party, but he cherished the

hope of accompanying the remainder of the society, to unite with the pioneers who went with Elder Brewster. This hope was not realized, for he died March 1st, 1625, at the age of fifty years. Winslow, writing of this event, says :—

“ When God took him away from them and us by death, the University and ministers of the city accompanied him to his grave with all their accustomed solemnities, bewailing the great loss, that not only that particular church had, whereof he was pastor, but some of the chief of them sadly affirmed that all the churches of Christ sustained a loss by the death of that worthy instrument of the Gospel.”

He was buried in St. Peter's Kerk, in Leyden, on March 4th, 1625, in a common grave, and no memorial marks the spot.*

Dr. William Ames was held in very high repute for his controversial powers, especially in Holland, where he resided for so long a time. The following brief account of his early years from an old M.S. may be interesting :

“ In Ipswich Doctor William Ames did first draw his vitall breath. His parents were persons of good account as to ye world. His father, Mr. William Ames, was a merchant adventurer, who married *Joane*, ye daughter of *Mr. Snelling*. His mother was brought to bed of him in ye yeare of our Lord 1576. [His parents] both died in his minority. The Lord became the guardian of this His orphan, and put him into the hands of a living, careful uncle, *Mr. Snelling*, his mother's own brother, who lived at Boxford.

* In 1891 when the first International Congregational Council met in London a number of American representatives, accompanied by an English deputation, proceeded to Leyden for the purpose of unveiling a large bronze tablet, which they had brought from America. The tablet is affixed to the wall of St. Peter's Kerk, where Robinson was buried. The inscription on the tablet is as follows :—

The Mayflower, 1620.

In Memory of

REV. JOHN ROBINSON, M.A.

Pastor of the English Church worshipping over
against this spot, A.D. 1609-1625, whence at
his prompting went forth

THE PILGRIM FATHERS,

to settle in New England,
in 1620.

Buried under this house of worship
4 March, 1625,

Æt XLIX. years.

In memoria æterna erit justus.

Erected by the National Council of the Congregational
Church of the United States of America, A.D. 1891.

"In this parish lived one, Mr. Sa[ndes],* who was a very reverend, learned, and godly preacher, whose ministry the Lord blessed unto Mr. Snelling's soul. . . . This uncle brought him up in learning, sent him to Cambridge, and fixed him up at Christ Colledg. Mr. Perkins was then a famous minister at Cambridge, and it pleased God that young Ames should be called out of his naturall estate of sin and misery by ye lowd voice of his powerful ministry."

Ames was his hearer till his death, and after that of his successor, Mr. Baynes, with whom he was very intimate.

After he had taken his degrees in Divinity,

"He was so honoured by ye whole University, and so dearly beloved by his Colledg, that that learned society, upon the death of their master, had chosen him to succeed in ye government of their colledg ;" but a party among them "most zealously addicted to ye rites and ceremonys, did most vehemently oppose his election, and Dr. Cary was chosen, who presently after quarellled with him, and threatened him that if he did not conform as well as the rest of the fellows, he would expell him the Colledg."

Dr. Thomas Goodwin tells us that he entered the same College August 13th, 1613, and that

"There remained still in the college six fellows that were great Tutors, who professed religion after the straitest sort then called Puritans . . . and Dr. Ames, that worthy professor of divinity at Franeker, who wrote *Puritanismus Anglicanus*, had been fellow of that College, and not long before my time had been driven both from the College and the University. The worth and holiness of that man is sufficiently known by what he did afterwards for the Low Countries."

Dr. Fuller, in his History of the University of Cambridge, says :—

"Mr. Ames was preaching (about the year 1610) at St. Mary's, or to use his own expression, 'having the place of a watchman for an hour in the tower of the University,' took occasion to inveigh against the liberty taken at that time, especially in those colleges which had lords of misrule, and pagan relique, which, he said, as Polydore Virgil observed, remains only in England. Hence he proceeded to condemn all playing at cards and dice. . . . His sermon gave great offence to many of his auditors, the rather because there was in him a concurrence of much nonconformity, insomuch that, to prevent an expulsion from Dr. Val. Cary, the master, he forsook the college, which proved unto him neither loss nor disgrace, being chosen afterwards by the States of Friesland, Professor of their University."

* Mr. Sandes was one of the Suffolk ministers who refused to subscribe Whitgift's articles, and was therefore suspended.

When he left College " he could not get any preferment in England by reason of his Nonconformity, and radicated affection to ye primitive discipline and worship of ye Apostolicall times." He was called to Colchester, as Lecturer to the Corporation, in 1609-10, but the Bishop of London would not sanction his appointment.

In his last work, published after his death, he says :—

" I was once, and but once (I thank God) before a Bishop ; and being presented unto him by a chief magistrate of an Incorporation for to be preacher in their towne, the lowly man first asked them how they durst choose a preacher without his consent ? You (sayd he) are to receyve the preacher that I appoint you, for I am your Pastor (though he never fed them). And then turning to me : How durst you (sayd he) preache in my Diocese without my leave ? So that without any other reason but *meer Lordship* the whole Incorporation and I were dismissed to wayt his pleasure ; which I (for my part) have been doen this twenty year and more."

He first went to Leyden, and then to the Hague, where he succeeded Dr. John Burgess as Chaplain to Sir Horatio Vere and the English troops. Here he married the daughter of his predecessor, " but he had not any children by this his wife " ; and here also he found scope for the exercise of his controversial powers. A strict Calvinist, he contended with Grevinchovius on the points of difference between his own party and the Arminians. During the sittings of the Synod of Dort he received a salary from the States General of Holland, to enable him to live in Dort, and aid the President of the Synod by his suggestions. After the close of the Synod he received the appointment of Inspector of the youths who were studying at Leyden, supported by bursaries derived from Amsterdam, and it was for their instruction he composed his *Medulla Theologiæ*. He lost his appointment at the Hague through the agency of Archbishop Abbot, who wrote to the Ambassador urging his removal. The same agency prevented his being chosen a professor in the University of Leyden, and it was again employed but without success, to hinder his appointment by the States of Friesland to a professorship in the University of Franeker. In 1622 he received that appointment, and continued professor for nearly twelve years, during which he wrote learnedly and strongly against Arminianism, Popery, and the English ceremonies. He then found the air too strong for his constitution, and removed to Rotterdam in 1633 to become one of the ministers of the English Congregational Church there, in conjunction with the famous Hugh Peters. He contemplated a removal to America, but was arrested by death at Rotterdam, November 14th, 1633, aged 57,

and there he was buried.*

His fame as a Professor was so great that many came from remote nations to be educated under him, and his writings were held in the highest esteem. Hugh Peters says of him :—

“ Learned Amesius breathed his last into my bosom, who left his professorship in Friesland to live with me, because of my church's independence at Rotterdam. He was my colleague and chosen brother to the Church where I was an unworthy pastor.”

Dr. Ames is reported to have influenced Robinson in the modification of his views, and there is no doubt that his brother-in-law, John Phillip, Rector of Wrentham, was indebted to him for the opinions he entertained on ecclesiastical matters. Dr. Ames was twice married ; by his second wife he had three children, two sons and a daughter, who survived him. After his death his widow and orphans were kindly and bountifully relieved by the pious Magistracy of Rotterdam.

Some time after her husband's death Mrs. Ames left Rotterdam and came to Yarmouth, whence she embarked for America with her children in 1637. In Felt's annals of Salem, Mass., it is recorded that “ Joane Amyes was granted land by the Salem authorities in 1637, and that in the same year the general court gave £40 to Mrs. Ames, the widow of Dr. Ames, *of famous memory*.” And it appears by the Cambridge town records that Mrs. Ames was buried December 23rd, 1644. Her children settled in America, and rose to honourable positions ; and for generations the name appears in connection with scholarship and religion in the New World.

In 1625, on March 27th, King James died, and was succeeded by his son, Charles I. Throughout the reign of these two kings, and under the rule of tyrannical Archbishops and Bishops, who were chosen mainly because they served the purposes of their royal masters, persecution of Nonconformists went on apace. Many of them, to use King James's words, were “ harried out of the country ” ; some of them preferred to remain and face the storm, which fell upon them with relentless fury. In the diocese

* “ The manner of his death was thus. There happened about midnight a sudden inundation of ye seas upon that city (Rotterdam). Dr. Ames, rising out of his bed, and not knowing it, put his feet unexpectedly into ye waters, which were now in his bed chamber. This struck him into a sudden fright, and that into a feavour, which in despite of all ye skill and means used by Physitians, did in a few days consume ye oyl out of his lamp, and put a period unto his life. He died in ye yeare 1633, and in ye 57th of his age the Lord translated him from ye church militant to ye church triumphant. He was a man of a robust body, of a good and strong constitution. He was of middle stature, a quick and ready wit, of a most accurate and exact judgment, rare and exquisite learning, eloquent as the Spartans, not as ye Asiaticks singularly pious towards God, and truly charitable towards his neighbours.” —Quick.

of Norwich a succession of prelates were appointed whose one aim seemed to be to suppress dissent. And they addressed themselves to their task with an enthusiasm worthy of a better cause. The mantle of Whitgift had fallen upon Laud, and the spirit of these men was over the land.

Among the bitterest and most relentless of the persecutors who occupied the Episcopal throne of Norwich, Dr. Matthew Wren stands out in sharp relief.* His Episcopate, fortunately, was of short duration, lasting about two years and four months, when he was translated to Ely; but while it lasted it was exceptionally severe in its character. Nonconformists of all classes and denominations were made to feel how cruel are the tender mercies of a high church ritualistic Bishop. We are not left to draw upon our imagination in this case, for in 1636 Wren was impeached on account of his cruel and unlawful proceedings, and the Articles of Impeachment, 25 in number, carefully drawn up, are still extant.

Clarendon tells us that "he proceeded so warmly and passionately against the dissenting congregations, that many left the Kingdom, to the unspeakable injury of the manufacturies of the country." His portrait was published and prefixed to a book entitled "Wren's Anatomy, discovering his notorious Pranks, etc., printed in the year when Wren ceased to domineer," 1641. In this portrait the Bishop is represented sitting at a table, with two labels proceeding from his mouth, one of which is inscribed "Canonical prayers," the other "No afternoon sermons." On one side stand several clergymen, over whose heads is written, "Altar cringing priests." On the other side stand two men in lay habits, above whom is the inscription "Churchwardens for Articles."

The clergy of the diocese, or some of them who favoured the designs of Laud, had by their influence prepared the way for all the orders and injunctions of Bishop Wren.

From some of the sermons which have come down to us from that period we have some idea of the kind of preaching in fashion at that time. Ritualism and Sacramentarianism were the most popular themes. The Book of Common Prayer was, in many cases, exalted above the Bible itself. One preacher says of it:

"This is the pith of godliness, the heart of religion, the backbone of all holy faculties in the Christian body. Which way soever you turn you, here ye shall find the saying of the Saviour fulfilled, '*Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.*' Desire you new life? Here is Baptisme to give it. Are you gone from it? Here is Baptisme of tears and penance to restore it. Want

* He was consecrated in 1635, and concerning him Harbottle Grimston, punning upon his name, says "The least of all these birds, but one of the most unclean."

you weapons for spiritual warre? Here is the Catechism and Confirmation. Need you food for the new life? Here is the bread and wine of Christ's body and blood. Want you supply of vertuous young soldiers? Here is matrimonie and Christian education. Need you leaders or governors? Here are Christ's ministers. Want you provision for the journey to the High Jerusalem? Here is the *viaticum* of the heavenly manna expressed in the Communion of the Sick."

One might fill pages with similar puerile matter that formed the staple of the sermonic efforts of the day, but this is sufficient to give the reader a glimpse into the ministrations of the Church as by law established. It secured the approbation of those in power, and the hungry multitudes who went away with stones instead of bread, did not count in the estimation of these opportunists and time servers. But this condition of things did not go unchallenged. The soulless, meaningless sermons of the preachers, and the tyrannical proceedings of Wren, were the provoking causes of the publication of a pamphlet which, though small in itself, led to great results.

In 1636 Prynne wrote his "Newes from Ipswich, discovering certaine late detestable practises of some domineering lordly Prelates to undermine the established doctrine and discipline of our Church, extirpate all Orthodox sincere preachers and preaching of God's word, usher in Popery, Superstition and Idolatry, etc., etc." The tract says "Printed in Ipswich, an. 1636"; but this was probably only a blind to conceal the writer, and to shield him from his tormentors. The pamphlet is a scathing exposure and denunciation of the subjects referred to above and the Bishops and Priests who practised them. On the delinquencies of Bishop Wren he is specially severe. He says:—

"In our diocese of Norwich, where little Pope Regulus* hath played such Rex that hee hath suspended above sixty of our sincerest, painfulest, conformable ministers, both from their office and benefice, so as many of our churches (as the like was never since King John's days) are quite shut up, and *Lord have mercy upon us* may be written on their dores; the people cry for the bread of their soules, and their ministers are prohibited to give it them. This not only wounds, but breaks their heart, and makes them quite amazed."

It was evident that such an attack as this could not go unnoticed or unpunished. For writing this pamphlet Prynne was sentenced in the Star Chamber, in June, 1637, to be fined £5,000 to the King, to lose the remainder of his ears in the pillory, to be branded on

* Regulus signifies both a little King and a Wren, and the writer indulges in the quaint conceit expressed above.

both cheeks S.L., for "Schismatical libeller," and to be perpetually imprisoned in Carnarvon Castle. John Lilburne was concerned in printing and publishing the pamphlet; he was tried for the same and condemned to be whipt from the Fleet to Old Palace Yard, Westminster. We was placed in the pillory two hours' fined £500, and obliged to find security for his good behaviour, and imprisoned in the Fleet till he conformed to the rules of the court.

The sentence against Prynne was carried out with inhuman severity. Burton and Bastwick were his companions in suffering, and underwent a similar punishment; but Prynne having already had his ears cut off, now had to submit to have the stumps sawn, rather than cut off, by the common hangman. Such being the mercy of the Fathers of the Church.

Wren, as we have seen, was impeached, December 19th, 1640, for high crimes and misdemeanors, and on July 5th, 1641, the Committee reported "that the said Matthew Wren (now) Bishop of Ely, hath excommunicated, deprived or banished, within the space of two years, fifty godly, learned and painful ministers."

In his defence to the thirteenth article of that impeachment he says :—

"Mr. William Green, curate of Bromholm, was suspended for many defects, and among the rest, for want of clerical habit; but upon his submission he was presently absolved, and his license to preach was only taken from him; he being very illiterate, and having been of late a tailor. Of which sort of men many others must come into the reckoning to make up the number of "fifty" that were under censure; namely, Mr. Pitman, curate of Grundisborough, who, not long before, had been a broken tradesmen in Ipswich; Mr. Cook, of Fritton, not long before a country apothecary; Mr. Farrer, of Benetshall, a weaver made a minister; Mr. Bridges, of Wickham Market, no graduate, not long since translated from the common stage playing, to two cures and a public lecture."

Here it is to be observed that no moral guilt is charged upon these men. The Bishop or his predecessor had thought them qualified to enter the Church, and had ordained and admitted them. They were good enough till they exhibited signs of Nonconformity to the popish ceremonies, and then these defects were remembered against them, and were made the excuses for their punishment.

Whatever truth there may have been in the charge of want of learning in the men referred to by the Bishop, others were silenced against whom no such charge could be brought. They were men of solid learning and stainless character, whose only fault was that they chose to obey God, and the dictates of conscience, rather

than man, and refused to bow the knee to the Baal of Popery.

In 1638, on the translation of Bishop Wren to Ely, Dr. Richard Montague was appointed Bishop of Norwich. He had already filled the offices of Chaplain to the King, Prebend of Wells, Archdeacon of Hereford, and Bishop of Chichester. He had brought himself into notoriety in 1624 by the publication of a book entitled "A gag for the New Gospel? No! A new gag for an old goose; or an answer to the late Abridger of Controversies, and Beliar of the Protestants' doctrine." Falling in with the ecclesiastical current, and in harmony with the sentiment of the court clergy, it advocated Arminianism and Popery. The Parliament was offended at it, and took means to secure its suppression; but on the accession of Charles I., Montague published another book, containing the same offensive doctrines, called "Appello Cæsarem," 1625. The Commons summoned the author to their bar, but Charles took the offender under his protection and "the business into his own hands," which still further displeased the House. Here we have the first indication of the breach between King and Parliament, which was ultimately to widen into open hostility and civil war. Two of the positions which Montague maintained were these: "That the Church of Rome hath ever remained firm upon the same foundations of sacraments and doctrines instituted by God; and that the images may be used for the instruction of the ignorant and excitation of devotion." Laud himself was somewhat troubled at the King's action in this matter. We find him writing in his diary, January 29th, 1625-6: "I seem to see a cloud arising and threatening the Church of England: God in His mercy dissipate it."

But nevertheless, Charles, in defiance of the Parliament, continued to promote his protegee, till we find him at length seated as worthy successor of Bishop Wren. Wren had "made a desert and called it peace"; had driven away, as was supposed, all the unconformable ministers, and little else was left for Montague than to develop and enforce his Romanistic principles in his diocese.

Wren's victims were going or had gone to America and Holland, and this Episcopate was like the calm which precedes the storm. Montague died in 1641, and was buried in the choir of the Cathedral at Norwich just before that day of reckoning came, in which, had his life been prolonged, he would no doubt have been called to give an account.

Meanwhile, and before the cloud burst, let us follow the steps of some of those who were deprived by Wren, and compelled to flee the kingdom for safety. Seven afterwards returned; three of them took an active part in the ecclesiastical affairs of the district, and four were members of the Assembly of Divines.

Robert Peck, M.A., was ordained presbyter by John, Bishop of Norwich, February 24th, 1604, instituted to the Rectory of Hingham, in Norfolk, January 7th, 1605, and at the same time licensed to preach throughout the whole diocese by the same Prelate (Jegon). Bishop Harsnet subjected him to very severe treatment. He had catechised his family, and sung a psalm in his own house, on a Lord's day evening, when some of the neighbours were present ; for this crime the Bishop enjoined him and all who were present to *do penance*, and required each to say, " I confess my errors." Those who refused were excommunicated and required to pay heavy costs. For this and other acts of episcopal tyranny, the citizens of Norwich presented a complaint against his Lordship in the House of Commons. All the Bishop could say in his defence was :

" That Mr. Peck had been sent to him by the justices of the peace for keeping a conventicle at night, and in his own house ; that his catechising was only an excuse to draw people together, and that he had infected the parish with his strange opinions : as " that the people are not to kneel as they enter the church ; that it is superstitious to bow at the name of Jesus ; and that the church is no more sacred than any other building." "

He further affirmed that Mr. Peck had been convicted of Nonconformity, and of keeping conventicles, in 1615 and 1617 ; and that in 1622 he was taken in his own house, with twenty-two of his neighbours, at a conventicle. Such was the man. It was not likely that he would escape the hands of Bishop Wren, and so we find that he was deprived for his Nonconformity. In 1635 he left Hingham and went, with many of his parishioners, to New England. A town was built in the colony, and named Hingham after the old home. The story of his closing years is not very bright. He promised faithfully to remain with the people who had followed him into voluntary exile, but hearing that the Bishops were deposed, " he left them to shift for themselves, and came back to Hingham in the year 1646, after ten years voluntary banishment. He resumed his rectory and died in the year 1656."

William Bridge, M.A. a student of Cambridge and fellow of Emmanuel College, was born about 1600 in Cambridgeshire. He took his Master's Degree in 1626, and in 1631 " stood for his choice " as the " general lecturer of the towne " of Colchester. He was elected April 16th, but did not long retain the position, for we find, by the Norwich Assembly book, that Mr. Bridge was paid " for his Friday Sermons at St. George's of Tombland for the half yeare ended at Our Lady, 1633, according an order made in that behalf at the Assembly holden the first day of October, 1632, £6 13s. 4d." He was paid at the same rate to the year 1636, in which year he was summoned before the Consistory Court, where

he was deprived by Bishop Wren. But mere deprivation did not satisfy the Bishop ; finding that he could not make Bridge conform to his will, he excommunicated him, and issued a writ for his apprehension. He fled to Holland and settled down at Rotterdam, and joined himself with the Congregational Church there, where he was associated with Jeremiah Burroughes and John Ward, his companions in tribulation, and they were all called to office of that church of which Hugh Peters had been Pastor.

"Mr. Ward and Mr. Bridge came over to them from Norwich. . . . So soon as they came to Rotterdam . . . they conformed themselves to the discipline which Mr. Peters had planted. They renounced their English ordination and ministerial office ; joining themselves as mere private men to that congregation, which afterwards did choose and ordain both of them to be their ministers." (*Hanbury*).

Bridge continued in connection with this church till after his return to England. On the 16th of May, 1640, he preached a sermon "upon a prayer day, for the Prince's good success in going forth to war." This, as appears from a passage in the sermon, was the Prince of Orange ; and in his appeal to his hearers, Bridge urges them to "pray for Holland, their hiding place." In the following year (1641) he came over to England and preached a sermon "at Westminster, before sundry of the Honourable House of Commons," entitled "Babylon's Downfal." At this time he had no intention of remaining, for he says in the preface :—

"This sermon may prove all the legacy which your dying friend shall be able to bequeath unto you ; for I am now returning to that church and people of God, which Jesus Christ hath committed to me and others. And if in this voyage the Lord shall put the wind and seas in commission for my death, my desire is that God would forgive our adversaries, if it be His will, that have put us to these extremities," etc.

But notwithstanding his intention of remaining abroad, he shortly afterwards returned to England. In this year the Yarmouth records inform us that he "was invited over, with an offer of being appointed preacher," and in the following year he settled in Yarmouth. In 1642, he preached a sermon at St. Margaret's, Fish-street Hill, London ; and in the same year, under his auspices, the Congregational Church was formed at Norwich, which settled in Yarmouth in 1643, of which he became the Pastor ; and it is only reasonable to suppose that his public office in Yarmouth was one of the reasons why the Church ultimately settled there.

The civil war actually commenced in 1642. The battle of Edgehill was fought on October 23rd in that year, and the hearts of all men were stirred to their inmost depths. Men who valued

their liberties and believed that the Parliamentary cause was the cause of right and freedom, freely contributed of their substance to aid it. Mr. Bridge and his family were not behindhand in this work. The town records supply the following interesting item:—

“The Corporation declared for the Parliament in August, 1642; the people brought in their plate to be coined into money to be lent (given) to the Parliament; and among them Mr. William Bridge brought in for himself, for Ann Bridge, his daughter; for John Bridge, his son; and for Rebecca Bridge, his daughter, articles to the value of £42 8s. 7d. Spoons, rings, cups, etc.”

In 1643 he was appointed a member of the Assembly of Divines, and very constantly attended its meetings; and we find that many of the sermons contained in the five volumes of his published works were preached in London whilst giving that attendance.

In 1649, Mr. Bridge was unanimously chosen by the Council of State to be one of their preachers, but it does not appear that he accepted the invitation.

In 1658, he was appointed to attend the Messengers of the Congregational Churches held at the Savoy, and was one of the Committee for drawing up and publishing its Confession of Faith.

He continued with his people at Yarmouth till 1661, in which year “the keys of the Meeting-house (the chancel of the church) were sent to the bailiffs, and delivered up to the Dean and Sir Thomas Meadows, and the vestry door nailed up.” It is difficult to trace his career after this event; but the following stray notices throw some light upon it. Hooke, in a letter to Davenport, dated “the last March, 1662,” says:—

“None dare preach in any place not consecrated, which occasioneth Congregational men to crave leave of others of them who have yet temples to meet in . . . This, we think, will not hold long. Mr. Bridge hath no place; and many others as well as he in city and country.”

In 1663, we learn that he was strictly watched, and all his movements reported to the authorities. The Spy Book says:—

“Bridges hath a church at Yarmouth, and corresponds with Burton, an excepted person.”

In the same year (1663) he probably left Yarmouth and removed to London. Wood says that

“he carried on his cause, with Jeremiah Burroughes, in conventicles at Clapham, in Surrey, till about the time of his death, which happened (March 12th) in 1670,” and that he is not to be confounded with W. Bridges, of St. Dunstan’s

He thus appears to have been one of the founders of the church now worshipping in Grafton Square, Clapham.

In the Nonconformist Memorial we find the following account of him from "one to whom he was well known" :

"He was no mean scholar, had a library well furnished with the fathers, schoolmen, critics, and most authors of worth. He was a very hard student, rose at four o'clock in the morning, winter and summer, and continued his studies till eleven ; and many souls heartily bless God for his labours. Though he was strictly congregational, he heartily respected his brethren who had other sentiments."

John Ward, B.A., was ordained presbyter by Bishop Jigon, September 24th, 1614. He was instituted by the same Bishop to the Rectory of St. Michael's at Plea, September 10th, 1617, and licensed to preach throughout the diocese by the Lord Archbishop, the See being vacant May 21st, 1619.

Here also, as in the case of Bridge, we have the record of the ecclesiastical death of the man in the Consistory Court.

He left Norwich with Bridge and went to Holland. He was chosen minister of the Presbyterian Church at Utrecht, 1637, but declined the call and went to Rotterdam, and joined the Congregational Church there. He was one of the ministers, but withdrew, or rather was deposed, in consequence of differences which arose respecting "the matter of prophesy," Ward being for, and Bridge partially opposing, "the private members" prophesying "after the Brownists' way." Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, with "Master Lawrence and another" whom Baillie calls "the two elders" of the church at Arnheim, were the four commissioners who met in Rotterdam to arbitrate the differences between the dissidents on Ward's deposition. Ward left Rotterdam before January 10th, 1639-40 ; returned with Bridge in 1641 or 2, and the Yarmouth Church Book says that "he being called to Colchester, did there with others gather into Church fellowship, there continued" ; but all further traces of him are lost.

These are interesting as matters of fact ; they are interesting also as indicating the judgment of the early Independents on the question of Councils of Reference ; and further as showing the spirit and temper of the men themselves who, refusing utterly to submit to episcopal tyranny, were amenable to scriptural ecclesiastical jurisdiction. We cannot, moreover, omit to point out that this sad experience of the exiled brethren was over-ruled, and became the occasion of developing and illustrating a principle of church government which it was necessary at that time to exhibit as not incompatible with Congregational Independency, but perfectly in accordance with it, viz., the interdependency of the churches.

Thomas Allen, A.M., of Caius College, Cambridge, was born in

Norwich in 1608, and was afterwards minister of St. Edmund's in that city. He was silenced by Bishop Wren for refusing to read the Book of Sports, and to conform to other innovations then imposed. In 1638 he fled into New England, and approved himself, says Mr. C. Mather, a pious and painful minister of the gospel at Charlestown, where he remained till about 1651, when he returned to Norwich, where he became one of the city preachers. In 1656 he became Pastor of a Congregational Church in that city; and continued in that office for seventeen years, during which time he and the church with him experienced the vicissitudes occasioned by the death of the Protector, the restoration of Charles II., and the reactionary and oppressive measures of his disgraceful reign.

John Phillip. The account of Mr. Phillip is given in connection with the Church at Wrentham.

Of the rest who suffered under the tyranny of Wren, as they were not afterwards particularly connected with this district, the following notes will suffice.

Jeremiah Burroughs, born 1599, of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, was for some time colleague with the Rev. Edmund Calamy at Bury. He was instituted to the Rectory of Tivetshall, in Norfolk, April 21st, 1631, but was deprived on the issuing of Wren's Articles. He afterwards retired to Rotterdam, and on his return became a member of the Assembly of Divines, in whose affairs he took a prominent part. He was chosen lecturer to the congregations of Stepney and Cripplegate, but died before the Assembly was dissolved. The "Perfect Occurrences," November 13th, 1646, says:

"This day Mr. Burrows, the minister, a godly reverend man, died. It seems he had a bruise by a fall from a horse some fortnight since; he fell into a fever, and of that fever died, and is by many godly people much lamented."

In the Committee of Accommodation, November, 1645, when it was found that the Presbyterians were indisposed to yield liberty to the Independents, he said:

"that if their congregations might not be exempted from the coercive power of the classes, if they might not have liberty to govern themselves in their own way as long as they behaved peaceably towards the civil magistrate, they were resolved to suffer, or go to some other place of the world where they might enjoy their liberty. But whilst men think there is no way of peace but by forcing all to be of the same mind; while they think the civil sword is an ordinance of God to determine all controversies of Divinity, and that it must needs be attended with fines and imprisonment to the disobedient; while they apprehend there is no medium between a strict uniformity and a general confusion of all things; while these sentiments prevail,

there must be a base subjection of men's consciences to slavery, a suppression of much truth, and great disturbances in the Christian world."*

William Greenhill was Rector of Ockley (Oakley, near Eye) in the County of Suffolk, and deprived by Bishop Wren. Born 1581, of humble parents, in Oxfordshire; entered Magdalen College, Oxford, as servitor at the age of 13; took his M.A. at the age of 21. Calamy says he was the person pitched upon to be chaplain to the King's children, the Dukes of York and Gloucester, and the Lady Henrietta Maria. He was a worthy man, and much valued for his great learning and unwearied labours; and John Howe styles him "that eminent servant of Christ whose praise is still in all the churches." He was one of the dissenting brethren in the Westminster Assembly of Divines,† and was ejected in 1662 from the Rectory of Stepney.

Christopher Burrell was deprived about the same time, but we do not know where he was beneficed. His successor was instituted October 19th, 1638, but the registrar omitted to name the place. Richard Blacerby left Ashen, in Essex, after 1644, to reside with his son-in-law, "Christopher Burrell, Rector of Wrattling, in Suffolk."‡ This is probably the place. We find a Christopher Burrell, M.A. instituted to the Rectory of Tivetshall, January 10th, 1672; this conformist died in 1701. He may probably have been a son or relative of the former.

Jonathan Burgh or Burr was instituted to Rickingham Superior, Suffolk, March 21st, 1639-40.

He was born at Redgrave in 1604, and received a university education. He was employed in the ministry first at Horningsheath and then at Rickingham, where he was Rector. Being suspended for Nonconformity by Wren, and finding "himself totally disabled from preaching in his native country without a conformity to the ecclesiastical impositions, contrary to the convictions of his conscience, he renounced all prospects of worldly advantage, and retired to New England with his wife and three children." He was chosen assistant to Mr. Richard Mather, pastor of the Church at Dorchester. Brook has given an interesting covenant into which he entered with the Lord upon his recovery from small-pox. He died August 19th, 1641, aged 37 years.

Henry Brew was deprived at Ubbeston, Suffolk, about the same time, his successor was appointed April 22nd, 1640, but of him we

* Neal III., 309.

† It is a noteworthy fact that all the preceding victims of Wren, except Perk, Allen, and J. Ward, were afterwards members of the Assembly of Divines, and all were Congregationalists.

‡ David's Essex Nonconformity, p. 611.

have discovered nothing further.

We have now brought our history down to the period when the fountains of the great deep began to break up. Some were then living who had been born in the reign of Mary, and during their long lives had witnessed the rising and setting of "that bright occidental star, Queen Elizabeth," they had seen the advent and exit of "the high and mighty King James," and now they beheld "the blessed King Charles the First," earning for himself, as fast as he could, his title to the martyr's crown. They had seen the Gospel in this diocese firmly rooting itself under the episcopate of Parkhurst; and the ministers, for the most part, studying and preaching the gospel itself, and refusing to be brought into bondage under forms and ceremonies; but when he was dead they saw a long succession of men occupying the Episcopal seat, each endeavouring to root out the profession of faith after the Geneva type, and to introduce in its place a religion of ritual and form. They form a succession about as unapostolical as can well be conceived. Puritans and Brownists had felt the weight of their episcopal crossiers and the history of the time is, at any rate from our point of view, one of persecution, suspension, imprisonment, excommunication, banishment, and death.

Laud and Wren had wrought diligently to root out both Puritanism and Independency, and they had achieved much; humanly speaking they might have accomplished their end, had it not been for the infatuation of the King and his advisers. If during preceding years *ecclesiastical* tyranny only had been exercised, Puritanism and Nonconformity would probably have been extinguished before the calling of the Long Parliament. But Charles and his ministers at the same time exercised an unbearable *political* tyranny, and liberal men in Church and State united their forces to vanquish the double-headed monster which was destroying their freedom. The complicated circumstances of the time soon presented an occasion for a trial of strength.

The King would force Laud's new Service Book upon his northern subjects. He required them to use it. The answer they gave to this demand was "The Solemn League and Covenant." The King took up arms against them, and must needs have money to maintain the warfare. Only a Parliament could give what he wanted; and when it was called it would not give to maintain Absolute Monarchy and Anglican Popery; and from these beginnings a civil war arose which, like a thunder-storm in summer, cleared the atmosphere of much that was inconsistent with the welfare of both Church and State. Of this great struggle which resulted in a glorious victory for religious and civil liberty we shall have more to say in a later chapter.

CHAPTER V.

PURITANISM IN IPSWICH.

"The Reformed Religion, after those fiery dog-days of persecution in the times of Queen Mary were over, revived and flourished again in this country under the auspicious reign of our English Deborah, Queen Elizabeth, and Ipswich, the Capitall Towne of Suffolk, was not more famous for its spacious streets, large and beautyfull buildings, rich and great trade, and honourable merchants, both at home and abroad, than it was for its learned and godly ministers, and for its zealous and religious inhabitants."*

* John Quick.

DURING the reign of Queen Mary, as we have seen, several Protestant confessors received the crown of martyrdom in Ipswich; and in Fox's Martyrs there is

"A complaint against such as favoured the Gospel in Ipswich exhibited to Queen Marie's councell sittyn in Commission at Beckles, in Suffolke, the 18th day of May, anno 1556, by Philip Williams, alias Footeman, John Steward, and Matthew Butler, sworn for the purpose."

It contains a list of eighty-one names of persons, male and female, arranged under separate heads, mentioning the parish in which each resided, as follows:—

1556. "The names of such as fled out of the town and lurked in secret places"; among these is that of Laurence Waterwade, late curate of St. Margaret's, born in a towne called Chorley in Lankeshire.

1558. "The names of such as have not received the Sacrament. Names of such as observe not ceremonies.

Names of priests' wives who have had access to their husbands.

Names of maintainers against this complaint.

Their requests to punish and convert certaine whose ensample might reverse other from their opinions."

As the first named of these had "fled out of the town," and were in places of concealment, and as the other lists were not made till 1558, the year of Mary's death, we may hope and believe that many escaped from the hands of the persecutors, and lived to bear testimony to Protestant faith in the succeeding reign. Shortly

after Elizabeth ascended the throne, we find by the tablet in the church of St. Mary-le-Tower, that town preachers were appointed who in a long and honourable succession proclaimed the Gospel to eager listeners. The early occupants of this office have passed away, leaving no monuments of their labours which have come down to our times.

The eighth in the list of names is Samuel Ward, who was appointed to the office in the third year of James I.* (1604-5). He was born at Haverhill about 1577, and was ordained Presbyter by John, Suffragan Bishop of Colchester, June 7th, 1601, when he became for a time lecturer at Haverhill, where a sermon preached by him on the conversion of Zacheus was the means of the conversion of Mr. Samuel Fairclough. He vacated his fellowship in 1604, by his marriage with Deborah Barton, of Isleham, Cambridge, widow, about the time he came to Ipswich. He became B.D. in 1607, and on the 10th of April, 1608, was licensed by Bishop Jegon, to preach through the whole diocese. Fuller, in his "Worthies," says that "his reputation was so great that he had the superintendence of several parishes," in Ipswich, "and was greatly beloved by the numerous parishioners." The former part of this statement may be doubted, but the town preachship would bring him into contact with the inhabitants of all the parishes in the town.

In Wodderspoon's "Memorials of Ipswich" there is an interesting reference to Mr. Ward and his office. He says "Mr. Ward's stipend as town preacher was a hundred marks, and an allowance of £6 13s. 4d. quarterly for house rent. The terms on which he took the office were that, in the event of sickness or absence, he should provide a minister to preach three times a week in the usual place; that he should not be absent above forty days in one year without leave; and that if he should take a pastoral charge his retainer by the Corporation should be void. In 1607 the Corporation purchased a house for him, and the next year they increased his salary to £90, and in 1616 they increased it to £100." He sustained this office for thirty-five years with much honour, and with much satisfaction to his hearers; and only quitted it when summoned to a higher sphere. He died 1639-40, and was buried in St. Mary-le-Tower Church, March 8th that year. A stone to cover his grave was prepared and laid in his lifetime, to be a memento of his mortality, which has this inscription:—

"Watch, Ward; yet a little while and he that shall come will come."

On the 20th October, 1616, he preached a sermon at "Paul's Crosse," entitled "Balme from Gilead," which was published by

* Wodderspoon states that he was elected November 1st, 1603.

his friend, Thomas Gataker ; several other sermons were published in his lifetime, but we owe almost all of them to the interposition of friends, as he ever manifested a great disinclination to print his discourses. He was a Puritan living in dangerous times, and because of his eminence, he could not escape the persecution of the ruling clergy.

His first difficulty arose in consequence of a caricature which was published in 1621, entitled "*Spayne and Rome defeated*," which has in the corner the words "Invented by Samuel Ward, preacher of Ipswich."* The Pope and his council are represented in the centre of the piece, and beneath on one side the Armada, and on the other the Gunpowder Treason. This picture was supposed to be published to excite a feeling against a Spanish marriage for the Prince of Wales, which was then in contemplation, and Gondomar, the Spanish Ambassador, complained of it as insulting to his master. Ward was sent for by a messenger, examined by the Council, and remitted to the custody of the messenger.

Being Puritanically inclined, he was in addition prosecuted by the Consistory Court of Norwich, in 1622, by Bishop Harsnet for Nonconformity. He appealed from the Bishop to the King,† who committed the articles exhibited against him to the examination of the Lord Keeper Williams. He reported that Mr. Ward was not altogether blameless, but a man easily to be won by fair dealing ; and persuaded Bishop Harsnet to take his submission and not remove him from Ipswich, especially as "he had been the means of retaining several persons who were wavering about conformity within the pale of the episcopal commission."

The result of all the proceedings taken at this time appears in the town books, where we read that on August 6th, 1623, "a letter from the King to inhibit Mr. Ward from preaching, is referred to the council of the town." But this inhibition was shortly removed, for we find he preached a sermon at Manningtree, entitled "A peace offering to God for the blessings wee enjoy under his Majesty's reigne ; with a Thanksgiving for the Prince's safe returne, on

* Samuel Ward had a genius for caricature or quaint conceits. In addition to the instance here noticed, and the inscription on his gravestone, we may mention that in his works, published in 1636, there is a page bearing on either side a flaming beacon, and between them these lines :

"WATCH, Ward, and keep thy garments tight,
For I come thief-like at midnight,
All-seeing, never-slumbering Lord,
Be Thou my WATCH, I'll be thy ward."

† In May, 1622, he petitioned "that as his Majesty had promised to pardon his errors and restore him to his former liberties, or otherwise provide for him, he might be allowed to preach in Ipswich meanwhile, or have his cause heard before the Council." S.P.O. Dom. Ser. 1619-23, p. 339.

Sunday, the 5th of October, 1623." The sermon was preached according to the title "on Thursday, the 9th of October, next after his Highnesse's happy arrival," and was dedicated to the King as an expression of gratitude for his clemency, and Ward signs himself "your Majesty's most loyall and thankful subject."

About ten years after, in 1633, we find him again in trouble, and the Bishop of Norwich, Corbet, wrote him a letter, which implies that Mr. Ward had satisfied him on the subject in question ; the letter reads as follows :—

"Salutem in Christo.

My Worthie Friend,

I thank God for your conformitie, and you for your acknowledgment ; stand upright to the church wherein you live ; be true of heart to her governours ; think well of her significant ceremoneyes ; and be you assured I shall never displace you of that room which I have given you in my affection ; proove you a good tenant in my heart, and noe minister in my diocese hath a better landlord. Farewell ! God Almighty blesse you with your whole congregation.

From your faithful friend to serve

You in Christ Jesus,

Rich. Norwich.

Ludham Hall,

the 6th of October, 1633."

But notwithstanding this submission, Laud says, in his report to King Charles I., January 2nd, 1634-5, "for (words uttered in a sermon of his) he is now called before the High Commission." The charges against him, at that time, were aggravated by a letter of Henry Wade, Commissory of Suffolk, written to Archbishop Laud, informing him that about 600 persons were then contemplating a removal from Ipswich to New England, a portion of whom were about to sail about the 10th of March, 1634-5. He charitably supposes that "they are indebted persons, or are discontented with the government of our church." He speaks of Mr. Ward, of Ipswich, as "the chief breeder" of these persons "of our parts, who by preaching against the contents of the Book of Common Prayer, and set prayer, and of a fear of altering our religion, hath caused this giddiness of our neighbours about Ipswich to desire to go into Newe England."

He tells his Grace that he had himself prepared articles for the High Commission, and would have exhibited them to the Archbishop, but he feared the opprobrium to which he would have been exposed ; and after giving him all particulars, requests him to take a roundabout way to bring the charge home to Mr. Ward, so that he as the informer might not appear in the matter.

Rushworth informs us that the charges laid against him were that :—

“In the month of November, 1635, Mr. Samuel Ward, a minister in Ipswich, preached against the common bowing at the name of Jesus, and against the King’s Book of Sports, and further said that the Church of England was ready to ring changes in religion, and the gospel stood on tiptoe as ready to be gone. For this he was censured in the High Commission, and there suspended, enjoined publick recantation, which he refusing, was committed to prison, where he lay a long time.”

By sentence of the court he was removed from his lectureship, and suspended from the exercise of his ministerial functions, and every part thereof, as well at Ipswich as elsewhere ; condemned to stand suspended and silenced until his Majesty’s pleasure ; ordered to make public submission or recantation, with acknowledgment of equivocation in his answers ; condemned in costs of suit to be taxed next court day ; and ordered to find bail for £22, that he will do all this.

In the year in which he was condemned and imprisoned, his sermons were collected into a volume, and in the epistle dedicatory to the last of them, alluding no doubt to his suspension, he says, “I have improved a little leisure, occasioned against my will, to whet upon you the scope and fruit of all my former labours, whose they are and whose I am ” ; and this is all he says about the persecution he endured. He then proceeds to say to “The Worshipfull the Bailifes, Burgher and Commonaltie of the Town of Ipswich,”

“One halfe of the Scriptures I have handled among you, and endeavoured to acquaint you with the whole counsell of God ; and what is now the top of all my ambition but to make you Doers of what you have been Hearers.”

His sermons reveal his strong Puritanism, and at the same time his lack of sympathy with the Separatists. In “the life of faith,” he speaks of “fleshly protestants raising contentions about matters of faith or making sects or schisms in the Church about needless trifles.” In his “Coal from the Altar,” he strikes impartially on the right hand and on the left, and sets forth “the maypole beguiling the pulpit, and the queasie stomacked Brownists casting themselves out of the church.”

Fuller says of him that he was “dexterous in designing expressive pictures, representing much matter in a little model and possessing the singular art of attracting people’s affections, as if he had learned from the loadstone to draw iron hearts.”

But notwithstanding all his excellencies, like most of all his school, past and present, he did not understand the doctrine of toleration. He could repress dissent from his own opinions by

force, if opportunity served. We find that on a certificate given by him, Henry Mud, and Henry Firmin, of Ipswich, were charged in the High Commission Court with holding erroneous tenets, but upon their submission, and giving satisfaction, the charge was dismissed.

About the same time that Samuel Ward issued his caricature on the Spanish marriage, another minister, at Norwich, spoke out upon the same subject. Thomas Scot was educated at St. Peter's College, Cambridge, took his degree of B.D. in 1620, and became Rector of St. Saviour's, Norwich.

"When Gondomar arrived in England to settle the preliminaries for the marriage of Charles with the Infanta of Spain, Scot had the boldness to publish a tract against that proposed measure, entitled 'Vox Populi; or newes from Spain; translated according to the Spanish coppie, which may serve to forewarn England and the United Provinces how farre to trust to Spanish pretences. Imprinted in the yeare 1620.' In this work the personal vanity of King James is spared, and his foibles soothed, while their consequences are pointed out in a plain and unflinching manner."

The printer of the book "bewrayed" the author, and thus "saved himself, and got his pardon, though the book was printed beyond the sea." The King was highly incensed against the author, and pursuivants were sent to apprehend him; but he, having had "prenotice," fled; the book was suppressed by royal authority, and Harsnet, Bishop of Norwich, was commanded to institute proceedings against him. The Bishop issued a summons, but promised his friends that there should be no further proceedings against him unless by command of the higher powers, and that even in that case notice should be given so that he might avoid danger. He speedily returned, for on March 20th, 1622, he preached an Assize Sermon at Bury St. Edmunds, entitled "Vox Dei," and then he calls himself "Minister of the Word at St. Clement's in Ipswich." He probably quitted England for the Netherlands towards the close of the year 1623, when he became preacher to the English garrison at Utrecht.

After preaching and writing for nearly three years at Utrecht, Scot was assassinated by an English soldier, named John Lambert, on Sunday, June 18th, 1626, whilst walking with his brother, William Scot, and his nephew, Thomas Scot, "as he came out of church from preaching." The soldier said he did it as a good work to take away an enemy to the King and State; but being tortured is said to have confessed that he was hired for money to do it, for the "preventing coming forth of a book he was writing of our last

Cales action "; his right hand was first cut off, and then he was executed.

The next Rector of St. Clement's was probably the nephew above named. He, too, was a bold man, and gave free utterance to his thoughts, as we find from the following extract from the "Diary of John Rous."

"September, 1631. Summer Assizes at Bury. Had one, Mr. Scot, of Ipswich, that preached before the judges, who made a sore sermon in discovery of corruptions of judges and others. At Norwich Mr. Greene was more plaine, insomuch that Judge Harvey in his charge brake out thus: 'It seems by the sermon that we are corrupt, but know that we can use conscience in our places, as well as the best clergyman of all.'"

In the Registry of St. Clement's Church, there is the entry, "Mr. Thomas Scot, preacher of God's word, was buried the 28th of June, 1640."

The day after Mr. Scot's funeral, John Ward, brother of Samuel, was instituted to the Rectory of St. Clement's (June 29th, 1640) on the presentation of John Brandling. He died April 18th, 1662, aged 67. He was a member of the Assembly of Divines, and Baillie, in one place, classes him among the Independents, but this is probably a mistake, for writing December 25th, 1646, on the question "Who shall be the King's ministers or chaplains?" he says, "it must be provided that he be not permitted to have any service either from Episcopalian men or Sectaries "; he recommends several Presbyterians and continues: "but I believe Newcomen, *Ward*, Ash, Pern, Seaman, Whittaker, or Calamy, would give as good satisfaction." As both his brothers were Puritans or Presbyterians only, in all probability he was one of the same class.

He was a man of very respectable attainments, and was called to preach two sermons before the House of Commons, one on March 26th, 1645, for which he received the thanks of the House. It was ordered to be printed, and came forth under the title "God judging among the Gods." It has on its title page, "By John Ward, Minister of the gospel in Ipswich, and a member of the Assembly of Divines." The other was a fast sermon in the same year. He was Rector of St. Clement's twenty-two years, and the parish register tells us that "Mr. John Ward, minister of the parish, was buried the 22nd of April, 1662," so that he just escaped the operation of the Act of Uniformity.*

Mr. Nathaniel Smart succeeded Samuel Ward as town preacher, and in 1643 or 4, Mr. Matthew Lawrence was called to fill the same

* A tablet in St. Clement's Church was set up by Thomas Essington, Esq., and Annie, his wife, to preserve the memory of John Ward, minister of that place.

office. The tablet to Mr. Lawrence's memory in the Tower Church informs us that "he was publicke preacher of this towne nine years and nine months, and that he died March 19th, 1653 (qu. 4), aged 53 years.

He was an "eminent and faithful servant of the Lord," and some years after his death a volume of Discourses on "The Use and Practice of Faith" was published by his friends and neighbours, John Ward, Nathaniel Smart, and Joseph Waite. The names which appear in connexion with the publication of this book bring before us at once a tableau of the Ipswich ministry of the time. There were associated in the town, at, or a little before, the time of Mr. Lawrence's death, Mr. Lawrence himself, an earnest and popular preacher; Mr. N. Smart, his predecessor in the office of town preacher; Mr. John Ward, the able minister of St. Clement's; Mr. Joseph Waite, Rector of Sproughton,* a man of similar views and character. The "epistle and preface" to the book is signed by John Fuller and Samuel Smith; they say "One of us had the happiness of near cohabitation some years to the reverend Author, and lived under the divine droppings of much of this heavenly doctrine that distilled from his lips." The Fuller here mentioned was probably John Fuller, who was then Minister of St. Peter's, Ipswich; afterwards of St. Botolph's, without Bishopsgate, London; and lastly in Ironmonger Lane, London, where he died. Mr. Smith was probably Mr. Lawrence's son-in-law. At the time the epistle was written the subscribers were living in London, but they speak of their "much honoured and right worthy friends, the magistrates and inhabitants of Ipswich, which the Lord hath long made famous and happy as a valley of Gospel-vision"; and they say "our due and deep respects of affection are much knit and drawn to our Christian friends in that town, so long eminent for profession of godliness."

During the time Mr. Lawrence occupied this position, a proposal was made to divide the counties into classical Presbyteries, and though the purpose was never carried into effect, except in London

* Joseph Waite, Rector of Sproughton, was the son of Samuel Waite, of Wethersfield. Mr. Waite seems to have had a fancy very similar to that of Samuel Ward; both were curious about their monuments, and played upon their names. In Sproughton Church is a monument, the centre of which is black marble, upon which is traced, in white, a triple cross, with a waning moon, the whole encircled by a cloud; it is inscribed

"Behold I come. Rev. xvi., 15."

Then again is drawn an hour-glass with two wings expanded, and resting on a death's head:

"I waite."

Just below there is a stone inscribed "Joseph Waite, M.A., after 15 years of conscientious and eminently faithful discharge of the ministry in this place, departed this life June 29, and was here interred July 1st, 1670."

and Lancashire,* the scheme for Suffolk was fully drawn up,† and in it we find that, in addition to the ministers just named, there were two others who were judged worthy to be included in the Ipswich classis, Robert Stansby and Nicholas Stanton, probably Ipswich ministers. In the year 1646 many ministers of Suffolk and Essex petitioned the Parliament for a settling of church government according to the word, etc., meaning thereby, according to the Presbyterian plan; and among the names are found those of Lawrence, Stansby, and Fuller.

Mr. Benjamin Brunning was also a minister in this town before the restoration. He was a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. A man "of great usefulness there, and of a general reputation in the university for his wit and learning." He was a man of considerable ability, and had "the most judicious persons in the town and country, both ministers and people, for his auditors."‡

He probably succeeded Stephen Marshall and Matthew Newcomen, who were town preachers, the former in 1651, the latter in 1655. He is buried in St. Clement's Church, where a stone directly under the front of the gallery bears this inscription:—

"Here resteth the body of Mr. Benjamin Brunning, sometime Lecturer of this town; who departed this life November, 1688. Also his wife and daughter."

He married Elizabeth, daughter of John Fuller, Minister of St. Peter's, Ipswich. Having given this brief sketch of Puritanism in Ipswich, we may now resume our narrative in the following chapter.

* Mr. Browne was mistaken in supposing the proposal was confined to London and Lancashire. In addition to these, Minute Books of classical Presbyteries held in Cheshire and Derbyshire and other counties are still extant, showing that the system prevailed over a large part of England.

† See appendix

‡ Non. con. memorials II., 428.

CHAPTER VI.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

1640-1662.

§ I. THE CIVIL WARS.

IN consequence of the state of affairs in Scotland, Charles was compelled to call a parliament. It met in April, 1640, and was dissolved in May, because it would consider grievances before voting supplies. But the King had speedily to call another, which was opened November 3rd, 1640. This remarkable assembly, known afterwards as the "Long Parliament," earnestly addressed itself to reform abuses in Church and State, and to remedy the evils which Laud and his companions had made unbearable. Clarendon tells us that "as to their religion they were all members of the Established Church, and almost to a man for episcopal government." This is evident from the fact that on November 20th, 1640, they ordered "that none should sit in their House but such as would receive the Communion according to the usage of the Church of England." Lewis Du Moulin tells us that they were "all conforming to the rites and ceremonies of Episcopacy, but greatly adverse to Popery and tyranny, and to the corrupt part of the Church that inclined towards Rome."

The object they set before them was to reform the Church, not to overthrow it; but the circumstances in which they soon found themselves placed required them to alter their design. The assistance of the Scots was necessary in order that they might throw off the civil and political tyranny under which the nation groaned, and the price they had to pay for this assistance was the adoption of the Covenant,* and the consequent removal of the hierarchy;

* The Covenant, as it was originally proposed, was entirely in favour of Presbyterianism, and absolutely opposed to every other form of church government; and Baillie, writing respecting the negotiations in the matter, says, that the English commissioners "were more than we could assent to for keeping a door open in England to Independency. Against this we were peremptory." At length it was provided, in the words finally agreed upon, that the Church of England should be reformed "according to the Word of God, and according to the example of the best reformed churches." By the introduction of these expressions, which could be variously understood, the English parliament was not bound beforehand to establish Presbyterianism, pure and simple.

but before they were driven to this they began the work of reformation.

On November 6th, 1640, the "Grand Committee of Religion" was appointed; and speedily petitions were presented from all quarters, in unprecedented numbers, complaining of the Romish innovations of the clergy and of acts of oppression and tyranny.

On December 11th the "Root and Branch" petition was presented to the House. It was signed by 15,000 persons, and prayed for the utter extermination of Episcopacy; but the House was not prepared for such an extreme measure.

On January 23rd, 1641-2, a petition for the reform of Episcopacy was presented, signed by 7,000 of the clergy; this was supported by others, with the same prayer, from all parts of the country. Two days afterwards the King professed his readiness to reform the Church, but not to remove it. The debate on the petition began on the 8th of February, it was referred to the Committee, and eventually a statement of grievances, under nineteen heads, was drawn up.

On February 14th the Bishops were excluded from the House of Lords and on April 19th both Houses declared what reformation they designed. Then commenced that legislation on ecclesiastical matters which, intended at first to reform, ended in the entire removal of Episcopacy. We cannot here give even a sketch of the proceedings of this period; but there are some particular events which we must not pass over in silence.

In August, 1641, an order was published by the House of Commons for taking away all scandalous pictures out of churches. The Earl of Manchester, under whose warrant the Visitors acted, received his commission as General of the Associated Eastern Counties in 1642; and William Dowsing, of Stratford, was the Visitor for demolishing superstitious pictures and ornaments of churches within the County of Suffolk in the years 1643-4.

"W. Dowsing appointed as his substitutes Edmond Blomfield, of Aspsall-Stonham, Edmund Mayhew of Gosbeck, and Thomas Denning and Mr. Thomas Westhorpe, of Hundon (a godly man), and Mr. Thomas Glanfield of Gosbeck, Francis Verden for Wangford, Southel(m)ham, Blything, Bosmere, Sudbury, Clare, Fordham, Blackmere and (would have had) Hartsmere; and Francis Jessup of Beccles for Lothingland and Mutford and Bungay, Blythborough, Yoxford, and Ringshall."*

Two or three entries out of about 150, will give the reader an idea of Dowsing's Mission, and of the spirit in which he performed it,

* Dowsing's Journal.

and will show that he did not meet with full acquiescence everywhere.

"Sudbury, Peter's Parish, January the 9th, 1643. We brake down a picture of God the Father, two crucifixes, and pictures of Christ about an hundred in all ; and gave order to take down a cross off the steeple, and divers angels, twenty at least, on the roof of the church.

Sudbury, Gregory Parish, January the 9th. We brake down ten mighty great angels in glass—in all eighty.

Sudbury, Allhallows, January the 9th. We brake down about twenty superstitious pictures ; and took up thirty brazen superstitious inscriptions, 'Ora pro nobis 'and' Pray for the soul,' etc."

So much for one day's work. But on the 6th of that month they visited Haverhill, Clare, Hundon, Wixhoe, and Withersfield, and did even a greater stroke of business.

"At Haverhill," Dowsing says, "We broke down about 100 superstitions pictures ; and seven Fryars hugging a Nunn ; and the picture of God and Christ ; and divers others very superstitious ; and 200 had been broke down before I came. We took away two popish inscriptions . . . and we beat down a great stone cross on the top of the Church."

"At Clare," he relates how "we broke down a thousand pictures superstitious ; I broke down 200 ; three of God the Father, three of Christ and the Holy Lamb, and three of the Holy Ghost, like a dove with wings. And the twelve apostles were carved in wood at the top of the roof, which we gave orders to take down ; and twenty cherubin to be taken down ; and the Sun and Moon in the East Window, by the King's Arms to be taken down.

"At Ufford," he says, "we broke down twelve cherubims in the roof of the chancel, and nigh an hundred Jesus's and Marias in capital letters, and the steps we levelled. And we brake down the organ cases and gave them to the poor. In the church there was on the roof above an hundred Jesus's and Marias in great capital letters and a crozier staff to break down in glass, and above twenty stars on the roof. There is a glorious cover over the font like a pope's triple crown, with a pelican on the top picking its breast, all gilt over with gold."

At Ipswich he broke down the twelve apostles in St. Margaret's Church. And so throughout the county this work of iconoclasm went on. In seven weeks he visited 150 places, and in one day mutilated as many as eleven churches. In many places strong resistance was offered, by the church officials and others, to this work of spoliation, but the work went on. The names of those who opposed are given, no doubt to be remembered afterwards.

We do not apologize for these visitors, the loss to ecclesiastical art cannot be estimated, but we have to remember the age in which these acts took place, and the spirit that inspired the leaders of this movement. We must remember, too, that they simply followed in the footsteps of the iconoclasts of a previous age, of whom Weever* says : "They despoiled churches of their copes, vestments, amices, rich hangings, and all other ornaments whereon the story or portraiture of Christ himself, or any saint or martyr was delineated, wrought, or embroidered ; leaving religion naked, bare, and unclad." The objects of their spoliation were real evils to them, and as such they destroyed them. We may regret their indiscriminating zeal, but we cannot deny that they thought they were doing God service ; and we have further a suspicion that a religion which wants such clothing and such accessories, must be something rather different from that which Paul preached, and which

"When unadorned's adorned the most."

About the time that Dowsing was breaking down the superstitious pictures, the parliament was removing "scandalous and malignant ministers," and Suffolk and Norfolk were not forgotten. According to Walker,† 129 were so removed in Suffolk, and 81 in Norfolk ; and with regard to the Suffolk clergy we gather that the specific charges brought against them were scandalous conduct in twenty-two cases, malignancy chiefly in twenty-two, loyalty in thirteen, popery in six ; in sixty-two cases no specific charge is given, four cases are doubtful, and two simply resigned. Of the scandalous cases, seventeen are given by White in his "First Century of Scandalous, Malignant priests." This author tells us that "the causes for which the Parliament hath ordered the sequestration of the benefices of several ministers complained of before them" were "viciousness of life ; errors in doctrine, contrary to the articles of our religion ; practising and pressing superstitious innovations against the law ; and malignancy against the parliament."

But neither the work of Dowsing nor the sequestration of the clergy, whether justifiable or not, can be charged upon the Congregationalists, who up to this time had scarcely a recognised existence.

It is a demonstrable fact that the Long Parliament was composed almost entirely of Episcopalians, and that, contrary to the general opinion, the leaders of what is called the Great Rebellion were at the outset Episcopalians. A careful examination of Clarendon's History will sufficiently prove this. The acts hitherto mentioned were therefore the acts of Episcopalians, and not of Presbyterians or Independents.

* Funeral Monuments, pp. 50, 51.

† Sufferings of the Clergy.

The ecclesiastical forces were now, however, gathering for the coming conflict. On March 15th, 1641, Baillie says: "All the English ministers of Holland, who are for the New England way, are now here (in London). These were, according to him, Goodwin, Burroughes, Hooker, and Simpson. Bridge is not named as he had not yet returned; and John Philip was yet in America; all these were afterwards members of the Assembly of Divines.

The Presbyterians were already upon the field, and shortly after the date last quoted, and whilst the Parliament was deliberating on the fate of Episcopacy, they entered upon a remarkable controversy. Bishop Hall had written a work entitled "Episcopacy by Divine Right," and now wrote his "Humble Remonstrance" in defence of diocesan episcopacy. Five Presbyterian divines, the initials of whose names formed the word "Smectymnuus," replied to him, and dealt a severe blow at the system he upheld. The writers were Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurslow. Four of these belonged to the eastern counties; Marshall had been minister of Wethersfield and Finchingfield in Essex; Calamy had been minister at Bury St. Edmunds; Thomas Young was minister of Stowmarket for nearly twenty years, was tutor of John Milton, and died in the year 1655. He was buried in the chancel of Stowmarket Church under a marble stone, the inscription of which has been partly erased by some high-church chisel, as may still be seen. Newcomen was minister at Dedham in Essex, and Spurstons at Hackney. All these were also members of the Assembly of Divines.

The King and Parliament were now on the eve of that great struggle which convulsed the kingdom, and terminated in the overthrow of Church and Throne. Pamphlets were soon put forth on both sides of the great controversy, and it is noteworthy that the first reply to the pamphlet for King Charles was by William Bridge. Dr. Fearne had written a book in which he "condemned the consciences of our parliament and soldiers, in their defensive war, which he calls 'resistance' " he charged them as "guilty of murder," and declared "the prosecution of the war damnable." Bridge replied in a treatise called "The wounded conscience cured, the weak one strengthened, and the doubting satisfied"; and some time after he published another pamphlet on "The truth of the times vindicated, whereby the lawlessness of parliamentary proceedings in taking up arms is justified, Dr. Fearne's reply answered, and the case in question more fully resolved." These pamphlets show that he had both knowledge and skill, and that he had a clear perception of the nature of government, and of the duties and responsibilities of kings and subjects. He also published in 1642

a sermon "On Courage," addressed to the Volunteers of Norwich and Great Yarmouth.

THE ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES.

On June 24th, 1643, the Ordinance was passed for calling the Assembly of Divines. This body had no legislative power, and was gathered to give advice to the parliament on matters concerning religion, which advice they could accept or reject at pleasure. Various religious parties were represented, but the Presbyterians were the most numerous. Dr. Stoughton says: "Others were summoned beside clergymen. Of laymen there were a few of weight and political importance. A few moderate Episcopalians were summoned, including four Bishops. Only one of the latter attended, and he did not come a second time. The other Episcopalians who first came soon dropped off. The majority of the remainder were Presbyterians of every shade of colour, from the lightest tint to the deepest blue. The Independents did not amount to more than ten or eleven." The congregation assembled in Westminster Abbey on the 1st of July, 1643, when Dr. Twiss preached a sermon from the words "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." There then sat a vast majority in black cloaks, broad bands, and small skull caps, where mitred bishops and priests in gorgeous copes had once ministered, and whence Anglican clergy had recently been dismissed.

The first work prescribed for them by Parliament was the revising of the thirty-nine Articles, and then came an order to take in hand the Liturgy and the subject of ecclesiastical discipline.

Without attempting to give anything like a full account of this remarkable gathering of Divines, it is interesting to note that of the ten or eleven Independents who were members of it, five belonged to Norfolk and Suffolk—Goodwin, born at Rollesby, near Yarmouth; Burroughes, ejected from Tivetshall; Bridge, ejected from Norwich; John Philip, ejected from Wrentham; William Greenhill, ejected from Oakley. These men had an arduous task to perform in the Assembly, which had not long met before it was apparent that little liberty would be given to Independents and others, unless they would consent to be included in some Presbyterian system of government. These "dissenting brethren" were exposed to a great deal of suspicion and misrepresentation, and in order as well to clear themselves as to give a full view of their opinions, five of them put forth an "Apologetical Narrative" in December, 1643. This was signed by Goodwin, Nye, Simpson, Burroughes, and Bridge. It was a remarkable and valuable production.

Without entering into any statement respecting the particular

views contended for by the writers, it will be sufficient for us to show that Norfolk and Suffolk, in the persons of these representatives, did good service at that time in the cause of religious freedom. These men no doubt did much to prevent the setting up of an exclusive Presbyterian establishment, which would have been as intolerable as the Episcopalian just abolished. Milton saw that, and said that "New Presbyter was only Old Priest writ large." These brethren stood firm and guarded our Thermopylæ.

THE FORMATION OF CHURCHES.

Mr. Bridge's Church was incorporated shortly after the ordinance for calling the Assembly was passed. Mr. Bridge returned in 1641, and he was followed in the next year by those manufacturers and others who had fled from Norwich and Yarmouth. On their return they took steps for the formation of a church, which after some preliminary arrangements, was incorporated June 28th, 1643. This was the only Congregational "gathered church" then, and for some time after, in this district. The explanation of this fact is found in the "Narration," a passage in which will throw some light upon an entry in the Yarmouth church book, and at the same time give us a clear idea of the prudence with which these "Dissenting Brethren" conducted their movements. "The Elders in London made an agreement, drawn up into nine considerations, to inhibit the further gathering of churches, and to desire that they should forbear for a time."* These Elders were unquestionably those of the "Congregational way" now in London at the Assembly. They "were environed about with a cloud of mistakes and misapprehensions," and were charged with Schism and Brownism; and in reply to this charge they say: "Had we been led by any such spirit of faction and division, or of pride and singularity, we have had since our return manifold advantages *to make and increase a party*, which we have not in the least attempted. We found the spirits of the people ready to take any impression, and to be cast into any mould, that hath but the appearance of a stricter way. But through the grace of Christ our spirits are, and have been, so remote from such dispositions and aims, that on the contrary we call God and man to witness our forbearance either to publish our opinions by preaching, or to print anything of our own or others for the vindication of ourselves or to act for ourselves in (our) way."

The reasons for their forbearance were—

1. They desired to avoid "the beginning of strife, which would have been as the breaking in of waters."
2. They apprehended "the danger of rending and dividing the

* Ch. Bk. January 7th, 1643-4.

godly Protestant party in this kingdom that was desirous of reformation."

3. They deferred to "the instant and continuous advices and conjurements of many honourable, wise, and godly personages of both Houses of Parliament, to forbear what might any way be like to occasion or augment this unhappy difference."

4. They trusted to the professions of the said parliament men of "their endeavour and desire to unite the Protestant party in this kingdom, that agree in fundamental truths, against popery and other heresies, and *to have that respect to tender consciences as might prevent oppressions and inconveniences which had formerly been.*"

5. They considered, they say, "that strict engagement willingly entered into by us, for these common ends, with the rest of our brethren in the ministry, which, though made to continue but ad placitum, yet hath been sacred to us."

6. "And above all," they say they were influenced by "the due respect we have had to the peaceable and orderly reformation of this church and state; the hopeful expectation we have been entertained with of an happy *latitude* and agreement of this assembly and the wisdom of this Parliament."

These were the reasons which kept them quiet for a time and which induced them for a season to forbear from the gathering of churches and admitting to church fellowship; but, disappointed with regard to even a toleration under a Presbyterian settlement, they henceforth bent all their energies to prevent its establishment. The Yarmouth Church complied with this "inhibition" for a time, but on March 17th, 1644, we find that it resumed its liberty of receiving into fellowship, and in the following month Mr. Bridge came down to them, and then it was decided that the church should be settled at Yarmouth, and that the brethren at Norwich should form themselves into a distinct society, which was accordingly done in May of that year.

Churches at Hapton and Pulham were formed shortly after; and in 1646 "the godly party at Wymondham" wrote to Yarmouth "concerning their embodying," and the first attempt at the formation of a church at Bury was made. Wrentham, however, was acknowledged as a Congregational Church, and had been virtually such from the time of Mr. Philip's return.

With these exceptions churches had not been formed in these counties, and the brethren at Yarmouth did not see their way clear to recommend their establishment generally till July 15th, 1647, when they "affirmed it was lawful that such Christians, known to be saints, as dwell at a distance from us might . . . if possible enter into church fellowship where they do inhabit."

§ II. THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE PROTECTORATE.

Till the death of Charles I., only six Congregational Churches are known to have existed in Norfolk and Suffolk.* But after this event, when the power of the Presbyterians was diminished, about thirty others were formed.† These were of two distinct types, the “gathered” and the “reformed.”

Gathered churches were societies formed by the voluntary adhesion of Christians, having no respect to parochial boundaries; and their ministers were in no sense (at least at first) parish ministers, but were chosen by the churches themselves.

In the *reformed* churches parochial arrangements were somewhat considered; the rector or vicar of the parish was the pastor, and the godly parishioners were the members of the church. They had their church meetings in the parish churches. Of the former kind were Yarmouth, Norwich, Bury, and Beccles; of the latter Wrentham and Denton. The pastors, in most cases, received their maintenance from public funds, and chiefly from tithes; though in some “gathered” churches the congregations supported the ministry. The greater number of them were admitted into Cromwell’s comprehensive establishment, where orthodox men of all tolerable opinions on Church government and ritual observance laboured together in considerable harmony.

Towards the close of the great Protector’s life, various forms of error arose, causing heart burning and sorrow to many of the faithful ministers and churches, and trouble to the government. “The Fifth Monarchy Men” and Millenarians existed in great numbers in North Walsham and its neighbourhood; and Mr. Brewster, the minister of Alby, appears to have kept his eye upon them, and to have reported to the Government respecting their movements.

A meeting of Messengers of the Churches was held in Norwich in March, 1655-6 to consider “What is to be holden concerning the personal appearing of Christ; and also how we ought to carry ourselves towards the power of civil government at this present time; and as the general vote of the Messengers it was concluded

“1. That there should be in the latter days a glorious and visible kingdom of Christ, wherein the saints should rule.

2. That it was our duty to give subjection, and if any should do

*Wrentham (1649-50), Yarmouth (1643), Norwich (1644), Hapton (1645), Pulham (1645), and Bury (1646-8).

† Walpole (1649), Syleham (1650), Rendham (1650), in 1651, Trunch, Alby, Sudbury, Woodbridge, and Fressingfield; in 1652, Wymondham, North Walsham, Tunstead, Guestwick, and Beccles; in 1653, Stalham, Edgefield, Sancroft, and Godwick-cum-Stanfield; in 1654, Wattisfield; in 1655, Denton and Flixton; in 1656, Stratton; at uncertain dates, Debenham, Needham Market, Clare, Haverhill, Rattlesden, and Henstead; at St. Helen’s and St. Peter’s, Ipswich; and before 1655, Lessingham and Foulsham.

otherwise, it should be a matter of grief and great offence unto them." (*i.e.* the churches).

The Quakers, too, about this time, in some cases interrupted the services of the Independents, and because of this, and on account of some peculiar opinions they held, the Independents of Yarmouth deprecated their admission to place of power. One of themselves makes the following statement :

" Thomas Bond, a Quaker, in 1655, went into the Independent Meeting in Great Yarmouth, and after the preacher had done, spake to the people till one of their elders (called a deacon) violently thrust him down over a high seat, to the endangering of his life, and then hal'd him out into the yard, where he would have spoken to the people ; but was there taken and sent to prison, where he lay among fellows, and the gaoler would seldom suffer any friend to visit or relieve him."

And the church book, under date December 28th, 1659, contains the following entry :

" It is our desire that countenance be not given unto, nor trust reposed in the hands of Quakers, they being persons of such principalls as are destructive of the Gospel, and inconsistent with the peace of civill societies."

It appears also that the subject of Baptism had troubled the churches, to which we shall have again to revert.

The great Protector died September 3rd, 1658, but as a meeting of Messengers from the Congregational Churches at the Savoy Palace was convened for the 29th of that month, it was decided that it should be held, notwithstanding the great change which had taken place. It was under the shadow of this event that the representatives of about a hundred churches met. The records of the assembly are lost, but from various sources it is ascertained that its sessions extended from September 29th to October 12th.

" Complaints were heard and advice given in several cases which were brought before them, relating to disputes and differences in the churches."

But their principal labour was the preparation of the " Confession of Faith," " to give an account of what we hold and assert ; that others may judge of us accordingly."

In the preface to the " Declaration," the Committee inform us that the object of the meeting was to devise means

" that there might be a constant correspondence held among the churches for counsel and mutual edification."

They say

" The generality of our churches have been like so many ships, though holding forth the same general colours, launched singly, and sailing apart and alone in the vast ocean of these tumult-

uating times ; exposed to every wind of doctrine, and under no other conduct than the Word and Spirit ; and their particular elders and principal brethren ; without associations among ourselves, or so much as holding our common lights to others whereby to know where we are."

They drew up a confession, now known as the "Savoy Confession" ; the committee appointed to draw it up that it might be "presented to them in their general meeting for their approbation, and to whom the care of publishing it after it was approved was committed," consisted of

John Owen	William Bridge
Thomas Goodwin	Joseph Caryl
Philip Nye	William Greenhill

George Griffiths, *Scribe*.

In this important movement our county was fully represented. In addition to Mr. Bridge we know that Mr. Crossman, pastor of the church at Sudbury, was present ; and the Beccles church book informs us that, September 20th, 1658, "At a meetinge then of the church, being occasioned by a letter from diverse churches touchinge a generall meetinge of the severall Congregationall Churches at London, by their pastors or others, brethren, at the Savoye, upon the 29th of September next, it was agreed by the church that our pastour, Mr. Otlie, should goe to that meetinge on the behalf of this church, and yt ye charge of the jorneye should be mutually borne by the brethren of the socyetye."

On the death of the great Protector his son Richard succeeded to the position. A man more unfitted for the exalted and difficult position he was called to fill, it would be difficult to find. Lacking in all the essential elements of strength, personality, and decision of character, which constituted the greatness of his father, few who knew the character of Richard Cromwell could doubt the ultimate fate of the Protectorate. For five months things went on fairly smoothly. He had some wise counsellors around his throne. Pierrepont, St. John, Thurloe, Whitlocke, and Lord Broghill gave him the benefit of their experience and research.

In 1659 Richard called a Parliament on the old lines, which his sagacious father had discarded, of issuing writs for the smaller boroughs. Then the storm broke. The Parliament was a divided Assembly, mainly formed of three great sections—the Government party, the Presbyterians, and the Republicans. The army also was divided into two factions, the Wallingford-house party, which was for a Commonwealth, and the Presbyterian party, which was for the Protector.

The Yarmouth Church book states that, on June 7th, 1659,

"The church received a letter from the church at Wallingford—

house, desiring advice from the church what they apprehended was needful for the Commonwealth ; the church considering it ordered the Elders to write to them, thanking them for their love and care of them, and also desiring to give the right hand of fellowship with them ; but concerning civil business the church, as a church, desire not to meddle with."

This was a wise and noble resolution, in such an exciting time. The Wallingford-house party succeeded in removing Richard, and so prepared the way for the Restoration.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RESTORATION.

1660-1688.

WITH the removal of Richard Cromwell the Royalists clamoured for the restoration of the Stuart dynasty. These clamours were speedily answered when, on the 23rd May, 1660, amid the roar and smoke of cannon, Charles II. left Holland for his native land, and entered London, six days later, amid the wildest demonstrations on the part of the populace. "The bells of England," says Macauley, "rang joyously; the gutters ran with ale; and, night after night, the sky for miles round London was reddened with innumerable bonfires." Men with brimming eyes cheered till they could cheer no more; and then washed their hoarseness away with joyous cups of wine and ale, which foamed in every hand.

One of the first acts of the restored Monarch was to hunt out and punish the living regicides. Not content with this, he sought to wreak his vengeance on the dead. In the January following his return, the anniversary of his father's death, the decaying bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw were torn from their sacred rest in Westminster Abbey, hanged in their discoloured ghastliness on Tyburn tree, and then beheaded at the gallows foot, and the decomposing heads transfixed to the spikes of Westminster Hall; an ignoble inauguration of one of the most ignoble reigns that mark the long line of English monarchs.

There can be little doubt that Charles II. owed his easy accession to the English Throne in no small degree to the Presbyterian party, and he promised them, in his declaration from Breda, "a liberty to tender consciences," and assured them that no one should in future "be disquieted, or called in question, for differences of opinion in matters of religion, not found to disturb the peace of the Kingdom."

§ I. THE HIERARCHY.

As to how far Charles redeemed the promise of Breda the incidents that followed his accession speak for themselves. No sooner was he established upon the throne than all his former declarations of toleration were scattered to the winds. The hierarchy was immediately re-established, and the church re-instated in its former position. When Parliament met in 1661, the desire to restore Episcopacy was evident. The members agreed to take the Sacrament according to the rites of the Anglican Church. The Solemn League and Covenant, which had been the charter of the Puritan party, was ordered to be burnt by the public hangman. In the same year (1661) the celebrated Savoy Conference was held, which presented an opportunity for composing the differences which had existed, and for healing the breaches which had been made, between the Presbyterians and Bishops ; but the Bishops, having recovered their lost position, were so elated by their success that they resolved to make no concessions ; and then commenced a series of persecutions which cannot be equalled in severity in any other Protestant church.

§ II. THE SEQUESTERED CLERGY.

All the old sequestered clergymen, surviving at the time, were at once restored to the places from which they had been removed, even those who had been ejected on account of their scandalous lives ; so that when they had been re-instated there was not a parochial clergyman enjoying a living to which any other man could lay legal claim. And by the same Act which restored the sequestered clergy, all other occupants of benefices who had been presented since the first day of January, 1643, were confirmed in their places, provided they had not declared in favour of the late King's trial and execution, or renounced infant baptism. Notwithstanding this, and chiefly by the pronouncement of Sheldon, Bishop of London, and Clarendon, the Act of Uniformity was afterwards passed which pressed so heavily upon numbers, not one of whom was enjoying another man's living (as is frequently asserted of the majority of them), and every one of whom was ready to conform to the Establishment as it then stood restored.

We have already seen something of the wild enthusiasm that swept over England at the Restoration of Charles II. This feeling continued to dominate the country for a considerable time, as the following extract shows :

"On the 29th of May, 1661, the first anniversary of the Restoration day, the whole nation seems to have gone mad with joy, if we may rely on the glowing accounts sent up by so many cities

and towns by the correspondents of the period to the two loyalist newspapers, "The Kingdom's Intelligencer" and "Mercurius Publicus." At Bury St. Edmunds the whole town 'was made an arbour, the streets covered with rushes, the houses hung with garlands and tapestries.' After a loyal sermon, attended by the 'purged corporation,' who 'have freed themselves from their tyrannous taskmasters,' the entire population followed 'the reverend effigies of Hugh Peters (that grand impostor), bearing in one hand the late rebellious covenant, and in the other a string of bodkins, thimbles, etc., which he gleaned from his sisters in iniquity; under his arm the silly Directory.' The common hangman led the effigy of the courageous and eccentric parliamentary chaplain, and the common beadle followed it, and whipped it through the streets. The figure was hung on a gibbet, with a picture of Oliver Cromwell, and a list of regicides, and burnt amidst volleys of shot and joyous shouting. At Halesworth, in the same county, writes another correspondent: 'We thought our zeal to the person of his Majesty would be best exemplified by showing the odium we had for Oliver Cromwell, his most tyrannical opposer, whose effigy was for some time exposed to view upon our pillory, and then with the Covenant and Engagement sacrificed in a bonfire of above 500 fagots, and with volleys of shot, of at least 500 in a volley.' **

§ III. THE CONGREGATIONALISTS.

With public opinion and feeling in this state, we do not wonder at finding that, of the thirty-six Congregational Churches formed in the Commonwealth and Protectorate period, fourteen only survived the Restoration. They had hardly been in existence long enough to be so firmly established, so as to be able to resist the overwhelming storm. Many of them were dissolved and their members remained isolated; in some cases the members united themselves with other churches. The societies which survived retired from public view; met in secret, and performed by stealth, as opportunity served, the rites of their simple faith; but they did this at their peril. We find the Yarmouth church meeting in private houses, and the Norwich church meeting "in small parcels," during this dark and dangerous time. And afterwards when the power of the hierarchy was at his height, the pastors had, in many cases, to hide themselves from their fellow men; they were imprisoned, fined, plundered, and persecuted, from place to place; but notwithstanding all this they kept on with the work to which they believed God had called them.

* Chambers' Journal, February, 1874, p. 128.

§ IV. THE PRESBYTERIANS.

The Presbyterians were treated little, if any, better than the Congregationalists. The latter could have cherished neither the hope nor the desire of being comprehended in the establishment ; but the Presbyterians had reason to expect that their wish would be gratified. Bishoprics had been offered to three of their number, and Dr. Reynolds had been so far satisfied with the terms proposed that, in November, 1660, he accepted the Bishopric of Norwich ; but the Savoy Conference, in March, 1662, showed that there was no mercy in episcopal breasts for tender consciences. The revision of the Prayer Book in Convocation in May, shewed that the clergy were determined to make the terms of admission into the church harder still. That book was made even more offensive to Puritans than it was before. The Act of Uniformity, which immediately followed, accepted the revised prayer book as its standard of orthodoxy, and compelled all who were already in the church to declare, not only that they would use it, but that they believed everything in it to be in accordance with Scripture.

§ V. THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY.

Among the persecuting devices pursued by the Episcopal party of the period, the famous, or rather infamous, Act of Uniformity stands out in sharp relief. This Act came into force on St. Bartholomew's day, 1662—a day which must ever be memorable in the annals of the Christian Church. "It is a day," says Coleman, "which numbers who were engaged in the performance of the deeds that made it memorable, might wish to have blotted out from the days of the year, and the remembrance of it lost in the record of their lives." It was on St. Bartholomew's day, 1572, that the streets of Paris ran red with the blood of the slaughtered Huguenots. It is a somewhat remarkable coincidence that this very day should have been chosen, ninety years after, by the professedly Protestant rulers of England for carrying into effect one of the most cruel and cowardly edicts that ever stained the history of the Church, or disgraced the statute book of a nation. The Act provided that on and after the feast of St. Bartholomew, August 24th, 1662, no parson or vicar should hold a living in England or Wales who refused to give his "assent and consent" to all contained in the Book of Common Prayer. "They were required," says Dr. Binney, "if they would be recognised as ministers of the Established Church, to give their solemn and unequivocal 'assent and consent' to those very observances to which they objected, and were to abjure those very views of the ministerial office which they conscientiously believed. Such was the requisition and demand of the law ; and

to such a demand honest and honourable men had but one reply. They could not commit perjury ; they could not profess to approve what they, in reality, condemned, nor abjure what they considered to be true. They could not do either of these things either to retain or purchase the patronage of Cæsar. They were placed in a position in which it was to be shewn whether they would submit to man or God. They chose the latter alternative. They determined to appeal from earth to heaven, and cast themselves, their wives, and little ones on *Him* who feeds the fowls of the air and the beasts of the forest.

The day fixed for the trial of their resolution at length came—the day fearfully anticipated and firmly met. It dawned upon them in the possession of that which, but for conscience, they might have continued to retain ; it closed upon them beggars and outcasts. This was the beginning of sorrows.”*

In this infamous Act of Uniformity nothing was more repugnant to these men than the clause which compelled re-ordination. This was virtually a denial of the validity of their previous ministerial status. The men who framed this bill doubtless saw this point, and, knowing the character of the men they had to deal with, gave it special prominence in order to gain their end. None voiced this feeling of repugnance to this clause more clearly and forcefully than John Howe. In a conversation with one of the Bishops, on the question of conformity, he was asked to mention one point in the Act to which he could not subscribe, and he mentioned this question of ordination. “Pray, sir,” said the Bishop, “what hurt is there in being twice ordained ?” “Hurt, my lord,” replied Howe, “it hurts my understanding ; the thought is shocking ; it is an absurdity, since nothing can have two beginnings. I am sure I am a minister of Jesus Christ, and I am ready to debate the matter with you, if your lordship pleases, but I cannot begin again to be a minister.”

The result of the passing of this Act was that more than 2,000 of the clergy were driven from their livings. They went forth from their charges and their homes, not knowing whither they went. A considerable number of these Nonconformists were ejected from charges in Suffolk. A list of them, as far as their names can be ascertained, will be found in the sequel.

Bishop Reynolds occupied the See of Norwich at this time, and it must have been peculiarly distressing for him to be obliged to cast out of the church in his diocese the very men with whom he most fully sympathised. Yet since he had accepted the position such was his fate. We believe, however, that the sufferers in this

* Dissent not Schism.

district owed their immunity from some of the severities of the persecution which the victims in other dioceses endured, to the presence of such a diocesan here. Their lot was, notwithstanding, a hard one, as the history clearly shews ; and we may well ask " if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? "

Many of these ministers (as we shall find) became in after years the pastors of churches, some of a Presbyterian and others of a Congregational stamp, which continue to the present day.

The policy of the rulers in Church and State was directed to the utter extinction of Nonconformity, and they designed to enforce a rigid Uniformity. But God " taketh the wise in their own craftiness," and men often fall into the pit they have digged for others. If they had allowed a moderate liberty in the church, humanly speaking, Nonconformity would have died out in a generation, and Dissenters outside the establishment might have been easily crushed ; but the men were infatuated ! They cast out thousands who were qualified to be leaders of tens of thousands who sympathized with them, and raised up a power which they were not able to subdue ; and the consequences of their infatuation soon began to tell upon the system which they so madly espoused, and so violently set up.

§ VI. THE CONVENTICLE ACT.

The Act of Uniformity was not enough to satisfy them. In May, 1664, the Conventicle Act was passed. It was known as " A statute for preventing and suppressing seditious conventicles." It provided that, wherever five persons above those of the same household should assemble in a religious congregation, everyone of them should be liable, for the first offence, to be imprisoned three months, or pay five pounds ; for the second offence, to be imprisoned six months, or pay ten pounds ; and for the third offence, to be transported seven years, or pay one hundred pounds.

§ VII. THE FIVE MILE ACT.

In October, 1666, a further act was passed for the purpose of harrying the ejected ministers. This was known as " the Five Mile Act," by which it was enacted that any dissenting teacher or preacher who had not subscribed to the declaration required by the Act of Uniformity, and refused to subscribe the oath of non-resistance, should not, except in travelling, come within five miles of any corporate town sending members to Parliament, or of any place where he had formerly preached. The penalty was a fine of forty pounds, or six months' imprisonment. Many of the Noncon-

formists, after their ejection, obtained a living by keeping schools, but even this resource was denied them, under colour of removing them from places where their influence might be dangerous.

§ VIII. THE INDULGENCE.

For seven years from this date the Dissenters were severely oppressed, but on the 15th of March, 1672, Charles, for political reasons, proclaimed an Indulgence ; preachers and preaching places were licensed, and then it was seen what ten years' oppression had effected against them.

In Norfolk, in which 77 ministers had been ejected in 1662, 46 licences for preachers were granted ; and 80 houses in 38 parishes were licensed as preaching rooms. In Suffolk, in which about 100 ministers had been ejected, about 60 licences for preachers were granted ; and 100 houses, in 67 parishes, were licensed as preaching rooms.

This measure was an exercise of the King's supposed prerogative, and was not the result of an Act of Parliament ; it rested, therefore, on an insecure basis, and the liberty accorded proved to be but temporary ; but while it lasted it gave the Nonconformists a breathing space, and the records of the time give us an insight into the state of their party. Instead of being crushed out, an examination of the list of licences for Suffolk reveals the following facts. In Ipswich and Bury the places of six ejected ministers were supplied by seven who had been ejected elsewhere ; eleven maintained their ground, and continued to preach in the places in which they had been legally silenced ; thirty-four changed their places of abode, but still continued to preach in the county, their change of residence being probably necessitated by the "Five Mile" or other Acts ; six are recorded as having died before the Indulgence was issued ; seven were too old to enter on the work again ; and of thirty-two we have no particular account ; some were dead, some removed to other counties or to other parts of England, and some had retired from the work. This statement will show that the men who suffered at the time of the ejectment, like Job "held fast their integrity," although Satan had endeavoured to destroy them without cause.

The Indulgence continued in force nearly two years, and then was withdrawn, the Parliament protesting against the dispensing power which the King had assumed.

1673. Though the Parliament opposed the Indulgence as an unwarrantable stretch of prerogative, equivalent to abrogating the law, they very considerably modified their feelings towards the Dissenters, and professed to have no wish to deprive them of their

liberty ; and “ their prudent behaviour did so soften the church party, that there were no more votes or bills offered against them even in that angry parliament that had formerly been so severe against them ” ; * for though they availed themselves of the liberty, they refrained generally from approving of the dispensing power, because they knew that the design of the King in granting the Indulgence was by that means to bring in popery.

§ IX. THE TEST ACT.

Chiefly to prevent this last result the Parliament passed the Test Act, by which all persons holding civil or military offices were required to take the oath of allegiance and supremacy ; to receive the sacrament according to the form of the Established Church ; and to renounce the doctrine of transubstantiation. Some of the Dissenters were parties to this Act, but they were led to suppose that they would be relieved from the disabilities imposed on them by it ; and a bill was brought in for this purpose, but it appeared afterwards that it was never intended to be carried, and the consequence was, that, for helping the Establishment to resist the encroachments of the papacy, they and their descendents were excluded from all public offices for a hundred and fifty years.

§ X. RENEWED PERSECUTION.

But though in 1672 it was said that the time had come in which it became all sound Protestants in some degree to forget their differences, and to act together against the common enemy, in 1675 a change was perceptible in the views and temper of the Bishops and their friends.

“ The promise of liberty and indulgence, made with so much apparent cordiality three years before, gave place to a cry for strict and rigid uniformity ; and the cavaliers and leading churchmen were resolved on attempting to exclude Nonconformists and Catholics, particularly the former, from all places of authority whatever, either in Church or State.” †
And so affairs proceeded for several years ; but in 1681,

“ The fury of the High Church party was stimulated to persecute the Nonconformists as the great allies of the Whigs. The old laws of the times of Elizabeth and James I., were enforced against them, by which their frequenting conventicles, or absenting themselves from church, exposed them to heavy fines, and precluded them from appearing as witnesses, from acting upon

* Burnet.

† Vaughan, Stuarts.

juries, and from suing for their debts. . . . All sorts of persecutions, both in city and country, were carried on with great spite and severity ; so that for the most part the Dissenters this year, and much longer, met with cruel and unchristian usage, greater than any subject had felt since the Reformation.”*

Charles II. closed his vicious and tyrannical career, February 6th, 1684-5. Having lived a licentious life, he died a Roman Catholic, and was succeeded by his brother James.

§ XI. THE POLICY OF JAMES II.

James was an avowed Papist. His policy was to give a toleration to all parties that the Roman Catholics might profit by it, and that so he might open the way to their restoration to supremacy.

In the first year of his reign (1685) he issued a proclamation to set at liberty all who had been committed to prison for refusing the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. Catholics, Protestants, Nonconformists, and Quakers were released. But this lenity was followed by the excesses of tyranny, which were perpetrated after Monmouth's rebellion, when so many suffered fines, imprisonment, and death because of their Nonconformity. James, however, reverted to his former policy, and on the 14th of April, 1687, issued his “Declaration for liberty of conscience.” The Dissenters generally availed themselves of the liberty accorded to them so far as their public worship was concerned ; but many refused to sanction the dispensing power by votes of thanks for this exercise of it. Yet some Independents, and many besides, gave expression to their gratitude, and among them were the members of the church at Yarmouth. On the 30th of March, just after the declaration was agreed upon, they ordered their new place of worship to be cleaned up, and on the 10th of April their pastor preached twice in the new building, “where was a great auditory, we then were permitted by the King by a declaration from him dated April 4th, 1687.” We can hardly wonder that they rejoiced, though we may regret that they did anything which looks like countenancing the illegal acts of the King. We find that on May 20th,

“An address to his Majestie was read and approved, and it was agreed it should be drawn out faire, and hands procured to it, and be carried up and presented to the King by Mr. Albertson and Mr. Hannott, who went up withall the 6th of June. They presented it the 10th of June at Windsor, and it was well accepted.”

The policy of James failed to secure its object, and he rushed on

* Vaughan, Stuarts.

to his own destruction. He defied the protestant feelings of his people, forced papists into places of honour and authority in the universities, required the clergy to publish his illegal declaration, imprisoned the Bishops, and at length having provoked the nation beyond endurance, precipitated the Revolution.

This dark night of persecution and suffering, extending over almost a whole generation, now came to a close. Many churches still existed which had carried on their worship during the whole period in secret places. The lives of the ejected ministers bear testimony to the severity of the ordeal through which they had passed, and the records of the churches contain many allusions to the persecutions endured.

The Yarmouth Church Book sets forth a resolution relating to the payment of fines inflicted under the Conventicle Act. The Bury Church Book records that

“ July 10th, 1681, being Lord's Day, ye church gave solemn thanks for God's delivering Brother Bowers out of prison, who had been detained above three years upon ye Writt de excom. capiend, and was brought out by a *Supersedeas*, at which time ye church freely distributed (contributed) towards ye charge.”

And there are entries in 1682-6, which speak of “ very troublesome times in w^{ch} ye wall is sometimes built.”

Whether at this period the clergy refused the rites of marriage to the excommunicated or whether, as seems most likely, the parties scrupled to use the Episcopal ceremonies, there are four instances of marriage performed in the Congregational Church at Bury.

“ In September 26th, 1687, Benjamin Carpenter, a member of this church, was marryed to Mary Wright after it had been declared to ye church, and some of ye brethren were present when they were joyned together.”

Similar entries occur February 14th and December 25th, 1689, but none after. The disabilities under which the Nonconformists laboured, for which they were principally indebted to Clarendon, the willing tool of the clergy, will appear from the following recapitulation.

1st. As to the dissenting *laity*, by the statutes of Elizabeth and James those who neglected to attend at church on Sunday, were liable to the censures of the church, and fineable one shilling for each offence, £20 per month for continual personal absence, and £10 per month for the non-attendance of their servants. These fines were recoverable by very summary proceedings; the lands of the persons offending were seizable by the Crown; and persons who neglected to conform might be committed to prison, or must abjure the realm, and, on their refusal or return,

incurred the guilt of felony without benefit of clergy, and the punishment of death ; by the Conventicle Act, additional and most severe restrictions were imposed.

2nd. As to the *ministers of the Protestant Dissenters*, besides being liable to all the statutes we have enumerated, they were, by the Act of Uniformity, subject to a penalty of £100 for administering the Lord's supper ; by the Five Mile Act they were prohibited, under a penalty of £40 from coming within five miles of any city, town corporate, or borough ; and by the Conventicle Act they forfeited £20 for the first offence, and for the second offence £40, if they preached in any place " at which there should be *five* or more besides those of the household."

And 3rd. Under the operation of these laws from the Restoration to the Revolution, during the short period of twenty-six years, informers acquired opulence by prosecutions, sixty thousand persons suffered for dissent, several thousands expired in prisons, and during three years property was extorted from dissenters exceeding two millions sterling.*

* Ellis's Historical Inquiries.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REVOLUTION.

1688-1714.

§ I. WILLIAM AND MARY.

WITH the deposition and flight of James II. the vicious and tyrannical Stuart Dynasty came to an end ; and a new era dawned upon England when William of Orange ascended the throne in 1688. The Dissenters called this “ the year of liberty,” and so to a great extent it was, though their advantages from the change fell short of what they had reason to expect. They had, with great self-denial, borne persecution and affliction, rather than concur with the King in those measures which would have aided him in re-introducing the papal faith. The rulers of the Church professed great gratitude for the valuable assistance rendered to them in the struggle with James, and they promised to treat the Dissenters with great consideration in time to come ; but, like Pharaoh’s chief butler, in their exaltation they did not remember their professed friends, but forgot them.

At first a comprehension was talked of, but was not conceded, “ God having provided some better thing for us,” and a toleration only was granted.

Twenty-six years had passed since the ejection, and many of the ministers, yet living, returned—not to the parochial churches or emoluments, but to their scattered flocks, which it was now their joy to gather again ; and among them they spent the remainder of their days, supported by the free contributions of those to whom they ministered spiritual things.

The fourteen churches in Norfolk and Suffolk then yet remaining came forth to the light, and between 1688 and 1712 thirty-six others were formed, twelve of the Congregational order,* twenty-two which called themselves Presbyterians,† and three Baptists. There were also stated lectures given in five or six other places.

* Nine of which remain.

† Of these, seven, many years after, became Unitarian, and twelve are now Congregational.

In the year 1691, the union of the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations was attempted with, what appeared at the time, complete success. Eighty London ministers entered into an association, and resolved to cease to be known as Presbyterians or Congregationalists respectively, and took the name of "United Brethren." The persecutions they had endured in common brought them near to each other, and they saw that their differences were not so great as they had thought. They published as the result of their conference "Heads of Agreement assented to by the united ministers in and about London, formerly called Presbyterian and Congregational"; and the Rev. Matthew Mead, of Stepney, at their request, published a sermon "preached by their appointment, at their happy union, on the sixth day of April, 1691, which was a day set apart by them, partly to bewail former divisions, and partly as a thankoffering to God for their present agreement." But though the union was not permanent, and radical differences again appeared, the attempt was an indication of a better temper between the parties than had previously existed; and in this country there was comparatively little distinction.

William III. died March 8th, 1702, and upon the whole his reign was favourable to the establishment of the Dissenters. "Then had the churches rest and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied." Acts ix., 31.

§ II. QUEEN ANNE.

On the death of William, Anne, the second daughter of James II., and a princess of Denmark, ascended the throne. Her reign did not continue the toleration granted by her predecessor. The High Church party was again in the ascendant, and all their old bigotry again manifested itself. The consequence was that repressive measures were enacted, such as the Act against Occasional Conformity and the Schism Act. This latter has been described as "the last and worst of the party measures of the High Church Tories." Its object was to incapacitate Dissenters for the business of education—even that of children of their own communion—and to deliver up the growing mind of the nation by exclusive patent, to be trained under the hands of the Established Church.

The advent of a popish successor was feared, and plots were formed to bring in the Pretender. The Dissenters were alarmed at the prospect before them; in one direction they saw nothing but the threatening faces of the High Church, and in another only the cruel visage of the Romanist. But God in His mercy interposed for their safety. Queen Anne died suddenly August

1st, 1714, on the very day the Schism Act was to have come into operation, and before the Jacobites had matured their plans to take possession of the land, the House of Hanover succeeded to the throne.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

1714-1800.

THE feeling of relief which the accession of George I. produced in the minds of the Dissenters, and the deep gratitude they felt in consequence, may be estimated from the following record.

John Beart, the pastor of the church at Bury, thus concludes the dedication of his "Divine Breathings."

"Our God hath given us rest and liberty under a wise, just, and good king, who judges the toleration of Protestant Dissenters to be agreeable to Christian charity, and necessary to the riches and trade of the Kingdom. Blessed be God, Who hath heard the prayers of His people, and hath put such a thing as this in the King's heart! Let us study what return we may make unto God, *and to the glorious instrument of our new deliverance.*"

In many parts of the country hymns were composed for the accession of King George, rendering thanks to God for deliverance from religious tyranny, and persecution, and anticipating brighter days.

But though the accession of the House of Hanover had frustrated the designs of the High Church party, it had not exorcised their bigotry. Shortly after this event, on March 17th, 1715, died Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, a prelate greatly trusted by William III. and his Queen, and a firm supporter of their liberal policy. Because of this he was bitterly hated by the High Church Tories; and to such a length did they carry their resentment, that after his death, a most scurrilous epitaph was written upon him.

§ I. DECLINE.

The comparative freedom which the Dissenters henceforth enjoyed, was not at first favourable to their external or internal prosperity; and their state in the rest of the eighteenth century is one of decline.

Several causes contributed to this; the very rest they enjoyed

after so much violent opposition and persecution, tended to produce a feeling of satisfaction if not of carelessness ; and the speculations in which some of them began to indulge on the metaphysics of religion, introduced Arian and Unitarian opinions amongst them, and deadened their spiritual affections ; as a consequence of which a coldness and indifference began to characterize many of the churches. In 1723, the *Regium Donum* was given to them, really though not ostensibly, as a bribe to keep them quiet and dependent on the government. The poverty of the churches, too, and the secession of many of their ministers to the Establishment, at the time exerted a depressing influence upon them, so that we are not surprised to find a writer in the *Wattisfield Church Book*, on July 1st, 1733, speaking of the death of Mr. Wicks, saying :—

“ This church has sustained a very great and unspeakable loss, being now left in a destitute, bewidowed state, exposed to many difficulties and dangers, and the more melancholy and afflictive such a dispensation at a time when there is such a general departure from the faith as at this day ; when error, infidelity, and iniquity abound ; and the love of too many to the truth as it is in Jesus waxes cold. A day wherein the faithful labourers in Christ’s vineyard are so few, and the deceitful and sophistical corrupters of the word and doctrine so many, that it appears exceedingly difficult for a church really adhering to the good old Protestant doctrines (the glory of our Reformation) to be again settled with a suitable and agreeable Pastor.”

The social and civil disabilities under which the Dissenters still laboured, acted in such a way as to draw many of their quondam adherents away from their party. The rise, too, of the great Methodist movement at first told upon their numbers. But when they had been tested by all these fires a sufficient number yet remained, purified and strengthened, to form a religious body whose influence was felt in after years.

The more serious members of the body not only recognized the declining condition of the Dissenting interest, they took measures to arrest that decline ; and they were more urged to this by the apprehension they entertained of the results which would follow if the designs of the Jacobites should succeed.

§ II. UNION AND CO-OPERATION.

The churches, conscious of the perils which threatened them, drew closer together, and formed themselves into an association for mutual encouragement and edification ; and when the rebellion broke out they manifested an intense interest in its progress and result ; for their own recently acquired liberties were again

in jeopardy. The diary of the Rev. Samuel Wood, of Woodbridge, portions of which have been preserved and printed in the Congregational Magazine for 1834, is our principle guide at this period. An analysis of this diary informs us that public and private fasts were very common in those days. The first of the private fasts mentioned was held at Tacket Street, Ipswich, March 10th, 1740-1 : "The day was kept chiefly on account of the declining state of religion among us." Mr. Wood, of Woodbridge, preached on the occasion from Amos vii., 2, "Then I said, O Lord God forgive I beseech thee ; by whom shall Jacob arise ? for he is small." From that period there is a regular series of such meetings held monthly in various parts of the county, and it appears that the rule observed was to begin the meetings about May, and to continue them regularly till October.

In the year 1745, the ministers were deeply affected by the "present melancholly aspect of our public affairs," and on September 18th they held a meeting at Stowmarket for "solemn humiliation by ministers and people," and resolved that October 8th should also "be observed by the ministers in their respective places as a day of solemn humiliation and prayer on account of the unnatural rebellion in Scotland ; and that like services should be held every three weeks during the winter season."

On the 20th of May, 1746, we find the ministers at Wattisfield engaged in "thanksgiving on account of the late victory over the rebels in Scotland" ; and the 9th of October was observed as a day of "National thanksgiving by authority, on account of the suppression of the late rebellion in North Britain in favour of an abjured Popish Pretender." With regard to the Union effected amongst them, Mr. Harmer informs us that

"The association of the ministers and congregations of these two counties (Norfolk and Suffolk) for stated meetings, took its rise from a friendly meeting together from time to time of the ministers of Walpole, Wrentham, and Southwold. By degrees they invited others to attend, till at length a considerable number associated together. The meetings of the three ministers began to be increased by the accession of others about the year 1770. These assemblies were attended for some time with great zeal, both by ministers and people. But after some years agreeably to the usual course of human affairs the zeal abated, and these associated meetings were in danger of dropping."

Dr. Doddridge, in 1741, met a considerable number of the ministers of Norfolk and Suffolk, at Denton, and unfolded before them a plan of association. This, together with the counsels and encouragements he gave them, strengthened the hands of those who, in an informal way, were at that time accustomed to meet

for fraternal intercourse. The doctor, on this occasion, wrote as follows, in a letter to Mrs. Doddridge, dated at Yarmouth, July 2nd, 1741 :—

“ We spent Tuesday at Denton ; and it was one of the most delightful days of my whole life. Seventeen ministers were there, of whom eight officiated, indeed exceedingly well. We held a kind of council afterwards concerning the methods to be taken for the revival of religion ; and I hope I have set them on work to some good purpose.”*

He afterwards dedicated to them “ with great expressions of affection and respect,” a remarkable sermon, preached by him at Kettering at the close of the year, entitled “ The evil and danger of neglecting the souls of men.”

In 1751, a regular Association was formed, of the proceedings of which minutes were kept for a considerable number of years. Ten years after various modifications were introduced into the Association, and “ they adopted all the regulations which Dr. Doddridge had originally proposed.” “ Their intentions seem to have been to form a friendly council, whom certain churches in these counties might consult with confidence in all difficulties,” and to cultivate a friendly correspondence (and intercourse) between all the churches in the district. “ There is, however,” says Mr. Harmer, “ one lion in the way, and that is the extreme difficulty of keeping up such a *constant* correspondence with anything of accuracy and life, and longer than the pursuit of some interesting object furnishes materials for it.”

§ III. REVIVAL.

It was shortly after the suppression of the Rebellion that the great Methodist movement made itself felt in East Anglia, which, as may be supposed, had a considerable effect upon the Dissenting Churches.

The condition of religion in England in the middle of the eighteenth century, presents us with one of the saddest and darkest chapters in the history of the English Church. During the reigns of George I. and George II., England sunk lower in ignorance and immorality than at any period since the Reformation. Among the educated classes, a sneering scepticism was almost universal. Archbishop Secker, in a charge delivered in 1738, says, “ An open and professed disregard to religion is become the distinguishing character of the present age ; it hath already brought in such dissolutions and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world, and such profligate intemperance and fearlessness of com-

* Doddridge's Correspondence, iv., 38.

mitting crimes in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal." Fletcher, of Madeley, in entering on his parish so late as 1760, makes this lamentation:—"The bulk of the inhabitants are stupid heathens, who seem past all curiosity, as well as all sense of godliness."

But the time of visitation was at hand. Upon this dark scene there burst the great Evangelical Revival, led by the Wesleys and Whitfield, which swept over England as the very breath of God; and soon there was a moving among the dry bones. The result of this awakening upon the existing Dissenting Churches at first seemed disastrous; they were depleted of their numbers almost to the point of extinction; tens of thousands flocked to hear the new preachers of the old Evangel, and were awakened to a new sense of their sin and neglect. It was as if a new Reformation had dawned upon the land, as indeed it was. The ultimate result of this great movement was an awakening of all the churches to a new sense of their mission and responsibility.

From scattered notices we have been able to gather the churches of Suffolk began to feel the breath of the new life, and manifested a living interest in the social, moral, and religious welfare of their own localities, and of the world at large.

In May, 1779, the Association met at Wrentham and "requested an interview with the Essex and Herts Association, about the line of conduct to be observed concerning the Bill for the relief of Dissenters from subscription to the Articles" of the Church of England."

In September, 1783, again at Wrentham, the Rev. T. Bocking was instructed to prepare a letter to the Rev. Mr. Towle, in which it was set forth that "the state and condition of the slave trade" had engaged the particular attention of the ministers present; and that they were impressed with the conviction that it was very "desirable that the same should come under some regulation, and even be abolished." Mr. Towle was requested to "make application to the Dissenting ministers in London, to know their sentiments upon this head"; and was further instructed by them that the associated ministers of Suffolk "would very readily join with their brethren at London, and in the kingdom in general, in such a petition to Parliament."

All honour to the men who could, even at this date, contemplate *even the abolition* of the Slave Trade, when they did not know the sentiments of the London ministers "upon this head!" Their names were Thomas Harmer, Wattisfield; John Hurron, Southwold; R. Shufflebottom, Bungay; Thomas Bocking, Denton; William Meyler, Wymondham; Richard Wearing, Rendham; William Swetland, Wrentham; Jos. Heppinstall, Beccles; Jacob

Brettell, Harleston ; Samuel Say Toms, Framlingham.

In the year 1786, a meeting was held at Bungay to form an Association for Norfolk alone, and from this time it appears as if the two counties acted separately.

On December 1st, 1789, at Stowmarket, Deputies from the several Protestant Dissenting congregations in Suffolk met to deliberate on measures for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. The Rev. J. M. Ray, of Sudbury, preached a sermon on Christian liberty ; and at a public meeting presided over by John Cumberland, Gentleman, a string of fourteen resolutions was passed, beginning with this : " that Liberty, Civil and Religious, is the inalienable right of every good citizen." It is not necessary to say more, the rest may easily be inferred.

On the 26th of October, 1790, the Suffolk Benevolent Society was formed. Its object was to relieve the necessitous widows and orphans of the Baptist and Congregational denominations, and the ministers themselves when aged and infirm. The annual meeting in June, at Stowmarket, has from the first been the occasion on which questions affecting the civil and religious liberties of Englishmen have been boldly and freely discussed. It used to be one of the great gatherings to which Congregationalists and Baptists equally repaired to exercise their benevolence and to sharpen their swords. There they met and ventilated their grievances, and thence they returned resolved to vanquish them. The fathers have departed, but their successors are still carrying on the good work, and still lift their voices in protest against any attempted infringement of the civil or religious liberties.

The old disabilities under which our fathers laboured and suffered are not yet swept away, and many still remain on the Statute Book of this country, and would be put into operation again if the " powers that be " only dared. In illustration of this the following extract from the life of Mr. Charles Farmery, Pastor of the Baptist Church at Diss, will be read with interest. On the 26th of January, 1800, Mr. Farmery went to Wetheringsett, in the adjoining county of Suffolk, and preached in the house of one of the members of his church there. He had not taken the precaution of having the house registered under the Toleration Act, for preaching, and it was not thought necessary to do so in order that he might hold an occasional service without interruption.

" Suddenly a neighbouring clergyman, who was also a magistrate, appeared, and took him into custody ' under the provisions of the *Conventicle Act* ' ; and then, with other magistrates, proceeded to exact the full sum of twenty pounds from Mr. F. ; twenty pounds from the *poor* man in whose house he preached ; and five shillings each, from eight of the hearers, chiefly very poor

persons ; in all forty guineas, for the supposed crime of preaching the gospel."

A friend lent him the money to pay the fines, and he went to Norwich and Yarmouth to collect it among his friends.

A yet more flagrant case of persecution will afterwards be presented in connection with the formation of the church at Wickham Market. In 1794, the distinctively Suffolk Association of Independent Churches was formed, which separately continued in existence till 1816, in which year the Rev. J. Sloper, of Beccles, preached a discourse before it at Needham Market. It then enlarged its sphere of action, and became "The Suffolk Association of Dissenting Ministers and churches of the Independent denomination for the promotion of the cause of Christ." It took under its care "the business relative to village preaching," and appointed a committee to form plans for a County Missionary Society, which was established the following year. Henceforth the Association had three objects, at least, which were kept distinct in the minutes of the meetings :—

- i. The extension of religious knowledge in the county.
- ii. Village preaching.
- iii. Missions in foreign parts, Ireland, and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

These minutes extend only to 1831, but the Association still continued. In 1847 the Society changed its name, and became the Suffolk Congregational Union. It restricted its labours to "the promotion of spiritual religion in the county in connection with the principles of Independency," and left the foreign missionary work to a distinct society. But the Union as at present constituted dates only from 1858, when its rules were adopted at a general meeting held at Stowmarket. The Association became a Home Missionary Society first in 1798, when the following resolution was passed at a meeting held at Wrentham :

"That it appears to this meeting that to preach the gospel in villages and other places where there is an opportunity of conveying religious instruction, is an object desirable and important."

And it has maintained this character ever since.

During the eighteenth century, only three new churches were originated in Suffolk, viz., Stowmarket, Woodbridge (Beaumont), and Halesworth ; and one of these more properly belongs to the seventeenth. In several of the Suffolk churches, which had called themselves Presbyterian, Arian and Socinian sentiments revealed themselves, whence followed confusion, dissatisfaction, secession, and decay. Needham Market became Socinian under the preaching of Mr. afterwards Dr. Priestly, and soon died out. A church

at Framlingham, now called Presbyterian, but originally associated with the Congregationalists, became a Unitarian church under the Rev. Samuel Say Toms, and still continues so. Lowestoft, which had a series of ministers holding Unitarian sentiments, recovered from their influence after the retirement of the Rev. Michael Maurice, the father of the late Rev. F. D. Maurice, of London. The Presbyterian churches at Bury and Ipswich are avowedly Unitarian.

Reports were obtained in 1774 respecting the condition of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches in Suffolk. Twenty-five churches were included in the return, and, making full allowance for those cases in which definite numbers are not given, we are compelled to conclude that the aggregate number of attendants at the chapels was under 5,000.

CHAPTER X.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

IN the early years of the nineteenth century the full fruits of the great Evangelical Revival began to appear. New churches sprang up in various directions ; some were offshoots from older churches, and others were established in neighbourhoods until then utterly destitute of the means of grace.

In Suffolk, within thirty years, twenty-one churches were established.* Of these fifteen have been more or less aided, especially in their infancy, by the County Union ; and some of them have been assisted during the whole period of their existence. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, almost all the chapels in our large towns and villages have been either rebuilt or considerably enlarged and improved, at a vast expense for so poor a county. Seventy chapels at least, larger or smaller, have thus been originated or restored.

PROGRESS OF THE DENOMINATION.

We have already seen that during the whole of the eighteenth century only three new churches were originated in the county ; and that in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century not less than twenty-one churches were established. Whilst this rate of increase has not been maintained, and could hardly be expected to be maintained, very real and steady progress has been made through all the years of the century.

We are able to avail ourselves of some valuable statistics procured for the Suffolk Congregational Union in 1863, from which we learn that the whole population of Suffolk at that time was less than that of the single City of Manchester, being then only 337,070, and that this population was scattered over an area of fifteen hundred square miles ; that there were only fifteen towns having

* In Ipswich two, Cratfield, Gorleston, Wickham Market, Cowlinge, Framlingham, Boxford, Bury, Brandeston, Stansfield, Cockfield, Falkenham, Thurlow, Alderton, Sudbury, Haverhill, Cavendish, Stonham, Haughley, and Mendlesham.

each above 2,000 inhabitants, and that nineteen of our churches were established in them ; that thirteen of our churches were in towns or villages having between 1,000 and 2,000 inhabitants, and thirteen others in villages having less than 1,000 inhabitants.

Now when it is considered that the population, especially of the smaller towns and villages, is almost entirely agricultural, and to a great extent proverbially poor, and on every side diminishing in numbers ; that the influence of the clergy and aristocracy is almost universally adverse, and that systematically farms are refused by some landowners to tenants who are known to be Nonconformists ; it may excite astonishment, and call for great thankfulness, that during the years from 1800 to 1863 the churches of this denomination alone have more than doubled their numbers, and that the *communicants* now are more numerous than the *hearers* previously.

In 1863 there were, in connection with the Congregationalists in Suffolk, forty-five churches, 5,018 members, 100 preachers besides the pastors ; 750 Sunday School teachers, and 6,623 Sunday School children, and sittings provided for 24,560 persons ; and in addition to these churches forty-two village chapels and thirty-four rooms, providing seats for 7,380 persons. Since 1863 the population of Suffolk has largely increased, being at the present time (1914) nearly 400,000. This increase, however, has been mainly in the large towns, like Ipswich, Lowestoft, etc. In the villages the population has largely declined, owing to agricultural depression, and the constant drift of the young life to the larger centres. But notwithstanding the difficulties which our village churches have been called to face, Congregationalism has been a progressive force in the county.

In 1913 there were one hundred and four churches, mission stations, and preaching rooms in the county, providing accommodation for 31,171 persons ; there were 10,292 Sunday School children on the books and 1,014 teachers ; 198 lay preachers, and nearly 6,000 members.*

Having brought our general review of the past to a conclusion,^s we proceed now to give brief histories of the individual churches so far as they have been preserved in church books and other authentic records.

* See Congregational Year Book, 1914.

PART II.

MEMORIALS.

CHURCHES FORMED IN THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK.

IPSWICH.

WE have already seen that during the Commonwealth and Protectorate Ipswich was well supplied with evangelical ministers ; most of them leaned to Presbyterianism, but two, at least, had embraced and carried out the principles of Independency.

Robert Gouge was pastor of " a gathered church " in St. Helen's. He had doubtless been introduced to that church in the town about the year 1652, by Robert Dunkon, patron of the living,* as both of them signed a letter to Mr. Taylor, pastor of the Congregational Church at Bury St. Edmund's, " in the name and by the appointment of the church at St. Hellen's in Ipswich, 3rd month, day 1st, 1656."

Mr. Gouge was born at Chelmsford, was of Christ's College, Cambridge, preached and taught at Maldon in Essex, thence removed to Ipswich, was ejected at the Restoration, continued to reside in Ipswich till about 1673 or 4, when he succeeded Mr. Samms at Coggeshall. He died at Coggeshall in 1705, at a ripe old age.

Benjamin Stoneham was pastor of another " gathered church " here before the Restoration. He was of Cambridge University, and afterwards chaplain to Sir Ant. Erby in Lincolnshire. His church probably assembled in St. Peter's parish, as representatives from a Congregational church there were present at the establishment of the church in Bury, 1655. Mr. Stoneham, silenced in 1662, went to London, and " preached in his lodging to all who

* In St. Helen's Church there is a stone bearing the following inscription : " Here lyeth Robert Dunkon, patron of this church, and three times Bailiff of this town, who died October the 19th, 1670, aged 76 years." When the Quakers were imprisoned in the town Robert Dunkon (formerly Bailiff) wrote a letter dated February 6th, 1666, pleading for them.

would come to hear him, for which he was committed to Newgate in the time of the plague. He died March 30th, 1676, aged about 64. He was a man of blameless life, and a zealous millenarian. The church of which he was pastor did not long survive its founder, even if it continued in being after his departure from Ipswich, for in 1677-8, "February 17th, Mrs. Mary Hamby, of Ipswich, who had sometime there walked with Mr. Stoneham in church fellowship, but their constitution being dissolved, came in as a member amongst us."*

When these ministers were removed from their work there was no public preaching in the town, except in connection with the Episcopal Church, for a period of ten years—the persecuting acts of Charles the Second's first parliament effectually prevented it ; but in 1672, when the King granted an indulgence, the Rev. Owen Stockton, M.A., took out a license, on the 16th of April, to be a Presbyterian or Independent teacher in Grey Friar's House in St. Nicholas parish, Ipswich. Mr. Stockton was born in 1630. He was educated at Cambridge, and ordained by a Presbytery in London on February 20th, 1655. He was appointed town lecturer at Colechester in 1657, where he was silenced at the ejection. In 1672 he was licensed at Ipswich and Colchester. When he was called to Ipswich he lived there, and preached at both places till his death in September, 1689. Calamy has it that he had a double call at the Indulgence from a congregation in Colchester, and another from Ipswich. That he might ensure both, as far as he was able, he undertook half the service at each, with others who divided the labour as long as he lived. In Ipswich Mr. Stockton had as one of his colleagues the Rev. Henry Havers, who was ejected from Fryfield, and so gathered together the remnants of the several flocks which had been scattered at the Restoration.

On Mr. Stockton's death the Rev. John Fairfax, M.A., who had been ejected from the Rectory of Barking (and who continued to reside in that parish, and preached to a society of Nonconformists there till his death), undertook the charge of the congregation at Ipswich, in addition to his own ; and there were, about that time, at least four other ejected clergymen residing in or near the town, who in all probability aided him in his labours.

As Mr. Fairfax filled so large a place in the early Nonconformist history of Ipswich, the following brief account of his life and work, from Stockton's Biography, will not be without interest. He was the son of the Rev. Benjamin Fairfax, of Rumburgh, and the brother of Nathanael Fairfax, of Willisham, all three ejected ministers. He was converted at the early age of eleven ; he was happy in a

* Bury Church Book.

liberal education. He became Fellow of Gaius College, Cambridge, which he lost, as well as his living at Barking at the Restoration. He was one of those who shared with Stockton the charge of the cause at Ipswich. Calamy says he was a great preacher, for many years stately giving seven sermons in the fortnight. "An invalid, he often ventured into the pulpit when his hearers scarce expected him to come alive out of it"; but it was his pleasure, as well as his business, to preach the Gospel, and as was said of another Puritan divine, "he flew to it as his cordial." When dying he preached to his family, friends, and those about him, till his speech faltered and failed him. This was at his house at Barking, with which he still maintained a connection, on August 11th, 1700, in his 77th year.

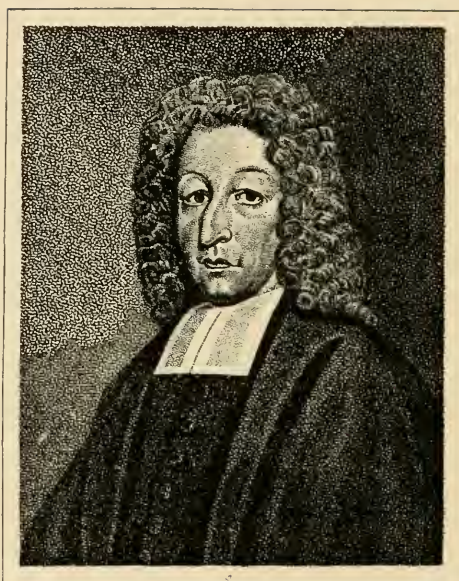
John Butler, ejected from Feltwell, in Norfolk, preached occasionally in the town and in the country around. He died in 1696, in the 84th year of his age, and Mr. Fairfax preached his funeral sermon.

"He was a man of sound judgment, an unblameable life, and most healthful constitution. When he subscribed the Attestation of the Norfolk Ministers in 1648, he was minister in Oulton. Some time after his ejection he travelled to Smyrna, then preached at Harwich, and then removed to Ipswich."

Samuel Bantoft, ejected from Stebbing in Essex, found a home in Ipswich, and lies buried in the grave of the Dunkins in St. Helen's Church. The inscription on the stone which covers his grave is as follows :

Samuel Bantoft, A.M., Clericus,
ecclesiæ de Stebbing, in agro Essexiensis
per 8 annos pastor fidelissimus,
August 24, 1662, Ciniliter, }
August 21, 1692, Naturaliter, } Mortuus
Anno ætat. 73.
Hoc marmore requiescat
beatam resurrectionem
expectans.

Thomas Waterhouse, ejected from Ash in Suffolk. "He was a scholar at the Charterhouse and went thence to Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He was afterwards curate to old Mr. Candler, at Coddendam, where he married a lady of good family. A Charterhouse living was given him near Bishop Stortford. On the breaking out of the civil war he went to New England, but returned soon after on family business, when he became master of the Grammar School at Colchester. He removed shortly before the siege of the town, and went into Suffolk, and settled at Ash. After he was silenced he lived in Ipswich, where he kept school, and preached occasionally.



*Rev. John Langston, D.D.
Late of Ipswich.*

He removed to West Creting and died there in 1679 or 80, being nearly 80 years of age." He was probably too old to take out a licence to preach in 1672, but his house at West Creting was licensed as a preaching place, and Thomas James, ejected from Needham Market, was licensed a Presbyterian minister there.

Tobias Legg, ejected from Hemingstone, M.A. of Glasgow and Cambridge. "He was a man who in the time of trial kept his conscience void of offence towards God and man, and in the divisions of the nation followed no party for humour, or fear, or worldly advantage. Silenced in 1662—forced by the Corporation Act to choose another dwelling—for above twenty years he preached in his own house gratuitously. He occasionally communed with the Established Church, and lived in great friendliness with the minister of his parish. He suffered much from gout and died in Ipswich in 1700. Mr. Fairfax preached his funeral sermon."*

TACKET STREET.

With the assistance of these and other ministers, Mr. Fairfax continued to preach in all probability to persons of both persuasions, Presbyterians and Independents, but in 1686 other arrangements were made. The Presbyterians hired a house in St. Nicholas' parish, where they continued to worship till 1700, in which year, on April 26th, the chapel which still stands in Friar Street, now Unitarian, was opened for public worship by Mr. Fairfax, who preached a sermon on the occasion, which was afterwards printed, and dedicated to Sir Thos. Cuddon, Chamberlain of the City of London.

The Independents hired a building in the Green Yard in St. Peter's Parish, formed a church and called Mr. John Langston, to be their first pastor.

The Rev. John Langston, M.A., who may be regarded as the father of organised congregationalism in Ipswich, was educated at the Free School at Worcester, of which place he was probably a native. From Worcester he proceeded to Pembroke College, Oxford, where he acquired a considerable proficiency in languages. At the Restoration he was minister at Ashchurch, near Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire, but was obliged to make way for the old sequestered incumbent who was then living. He retired to London, and kept a private grammar school near Spitalfield; but meeting with opposition there, when the Bartholomew Act came into force, he went to Ireland as chaplain to Captain Blackwell and tutor to his son.

In 1663 he returned to London, and again kept a school. Whilst there he was assistant to the Rev. William Hooke, M.A., who had

* Noncon. Memorial II., p. 423.

been master of the Savoy, and chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. In 1672 they both asked for licenses "to preach at the house of Mr. Richard Loton in the Spittle-yard for the present, and the next year at his house in Angell Alley in Whitechapel"; but their agent thought it not practicable to get the latter part of the petition granted, and therefore they were only licensed to "preach in Richard Loton's house in Spittle Yard, London." At length Mr. Langston removed into Bedfordshire, where he preached for some time. Having received an invitation to Ipswich, he came, and shortly after was instrumental in the formation of the Congregational Church now known as Tacket Street. The facts and circumstances connected with this are recorded in Mr. Langton's own handwriting, in the Church minute book, still preserved at Tacket Street.

"On October 12th, 1686, after several dayes of prayers and humiliation, and severall conferences together, and after I had severall times preacht to them wt. I thought needfull in a preparatory way, the following persons having on the same day related to each other wt. God had done for their souls, embodied together as a Church of Christ, giving up themselves to the Lord, and to one another to work together as a Church of Christ in all God's holy ordinances according to the rules of the Gospell, to the glory of God, and their mutuall edification in love." (Then follow 17 names of those who then formed the church).

Ten days afterwards, "on October 22nd," thirty other persons whose "spirits and conversation and unity of judgment with us in the great truths of the Gospell and separation from corrupt worship," were satisfactory to the church, and "were by joint consent admitted into the church, they also giving themselves up to the Lord and to the church."

And on the same day Mr. and Mrs. Langston were admitted "by vertue of letters of recommendation from a church in London." After which, at the same meeting (for in those days it was considered a point of necessary order that a minister should become a member of a church *before* he could be chosen its pastor), they "elected and gave Mr. Langston a call to the pastorall office," which call, on October 29th, he "accepted of conditionally, viz., that they would walk up to Gospell order and rule, and specially in union and love one to another." Meanwhile, twenty-eight persons more were added to the church.

"Nov. 2, 1686, was a day of solemne fasting and prayer wherein the church (by the brethren's lifting up of their hands) testified they had elected and called me to the Pastoral office, and I declared that I had accepted of yt call, and again ratified it; and I was accordingly then set apart for yt work and office, the following Elders assisting in yt work, viz., Mr. Manning, Mr. Petto, Mr.

Milway, and also Mr. Bidbank ; the three first at ye close of ye day gave me ye right hand of fellowship."

On Friday, the 5th, " the church met and I preacht a preparation sermon in order to ye Lord's Supper," which was celebrated on the 7th, and this " was ye first time yt ye church met together at ye Lord's table."

The foregoing extracts from the church book sufficiently show that Mr. Langston was on principle an Independent, and that he was careful that his people should act according to what they considered to be the " Gospell order and rule." The church, under his personal direction was first formed by *voluntary agreement*, they then entered into a *Covenant*, " giving themselves up to the Lord, and to one another to walk together as a Church of Christ," etc. ; it was a church *separated* " from corrupt worship " ; its pastor was elected and called *from among themselves* to office ; the call and its acceptance were publicly ratified in the presence of the elders of neighbouring churches of the same order ; and those of the elders, who had authority to do so, from the churches over which they presided, gave the " right hand of fellowship " to the pastor of the newly-formed church in token of their approbation of the formation of the church, their contentment with its discipline and doctrine, and their confidence in the pastor chosen to preside over it. The separate and independent churches thus became one brotherhood.

Whilst the church was thus being built with spiritual stones, a material house was being constructed to be their place of worship. This was in the Green Yard, and Mr. Langston makes a memorandum of a church meeting, " June 24th, 1687, being preparation day, ye Friday before yt Lord's day yt we first met in our new Chappell " ; and so we may conclude that they entered upon the services of their new sanctuary on the 26th day of June of that year, and consecrated it by an act of loving remembrance of what their Saviour had suffered for them. During the first year of its existence the church received one hundred and twenty-three persons into its fellowship. No other notices of any importance are given in the church book till we come to 1692. Meanwhile the " glorious revolution " had been effected, and a toleration established ; but these facts are not recorded. On May 19th in that year Mr. Langston " went for London," and he notices that it was " ye first day of ye engagement wth ye French fleet, for ye defeat of wh blessed be God ! " * On August 13th, there was a great storm with " usual thunder and lightning " ; and " On Thursday, September 8th, about 2 afternoon, the earthquake."

On October 5th, 1692, Mrs. Bantoft was admitted ; probably

* The battle of La Hogue.

the widow of Rev. Samuel Bantoft, who died August 21st that year. The fact that Mr. Bantoft was associated with the Dunkons at St. Helen's, and that his wife was admitted into this church, indicate a preference on their part for Independency ; as the connexion of the other ejected ministers with the other dissenting churches, indicate their preference for Presbyterianism. May 3rd, 1693, John Beart was admitted ; he was afterwards dismissed to be pastor at Bury.

From the absolute silence of the church book on the subject of persecution, we might have concluded that the pastor and church continued to enjoy peace as well as prosperity, but Calamy tells us that Mr. Langston met with great suffering here. He was compelled to leave his house, which was twice searched in the course of one night. His enemies sought for him all over the town, so that he removed again to London. Then they maliciously raised and industrially spread a report that he was a Jesuit, which made no little impression on some minds, even to the stumbling of some sober people ; so that he was obliged to publish a vindication of himself, by which he effectually silenced the calumny. The writer of the memoir* fixes the time of the persecution which drove Mr. Langston from Ipswich in the year 1697, and says that the charge of being a Jesuit was brought against him in London. We have never seen the " Vindication " which would probably throw light on the subject. Such a persecution would not be at all improbable previously to the revolution, but it is difficult to suppose that it was endured in 1697, in the reign of King William.

The writer probably fixes on this time because of the fact that the church book shews a series of entries so continuous from 1687 to 1697 as to afford no interval long enough to include such a persecution ; but from November, 1696, to February, '98-9, a period of $2\frac{1}{4}$ years, there is but one entry, viz., in August, '97, dividing the period into two parts of nine months and eighteen months respectively, during which such events might have been included. It is to be noted that almost in every year Mr. Langston recorded his annual visit to London with his wife for about three weeks each time. He does so in May 25th, 1697, returning June 18th, with no notice of anything unusual.

After this comes the entry August 9th, 1697, and then a void for eighteen months, which probably suggested to his biographer a fitting time for the persecution. June 4th, 1701, Jonathan Mills was admitted ; he was afterwards pastor at Tunstead.

In the latter part of Mr. Langston's ministry he was assisted by

* Evangelical Magazine, 1819, p. 310.



OLD TACKET STREET CHAPEL. *Erected 1720.*



EXTERIOR.



INTERIOR.

the Rev. Benjamin Glandfield, who records his coming in these words :

"On Fryday, November 20th, 1702, Mr. Glandfield, uppon ye invitation of ye Pastor and Church, came down to Ipswich, and on ye 22nd preached his first sermon among them, and soon after was unanimously called to ye church as assistant to Mr. Langston."

The Rev. John Langston died January 12th, 1703-4, aged 64, having sustained the office of pastor here for 17½ years, during which period 263 persons are recorded as having been admitted into the church.* The greater number of them resided in Ipswich, but the names of the following places are given as the residences of about sixty of them :—Akenham, Bergholt, Barham, Belstead, Brightwell, Bucklesham, Burstal, Capel, Chattisham, Copdock, Culpho, Dedham, Freston, Harwich, Henley, Nacton, Needham, Somersham, Wenham, Whitton, Willisham, and Woodbridge.

About a fortnight after Mr. Langston's death Mr. Glandfield "received ye call as pastor," and about three months after that he was ordained.

"On May 3rd, 1704, being appointed by ye Church for a day of solemn fasting and prayer, the Church, by the mouth of Mr. Tho. Wyncoll, our Deacon, and also by the brethren lifting up their hands, declared they had elected and called to ye office of Pastor among them Mr. Benjamin Glandfield, who then and there declared his acceptance of that call, and was accordingly sett apart for that work and office, the following Elders praying over him, viz., Mr. Samuel Petto, Pastor of ye church at Sudbury, who also at that time preached from I. Cor., iv., 1 (lett a man so account of us as of ye ministers of Christ, and stewards of ye mysteries of God) ; Mr. George Bidbank, Paster of ye church at Woodbridge ; Mr. Wickes, Pastor of ye Church at Wattisfield ; Mr. Hurryon, Pastor of ye church at Denton ; Mr. Wilshere, Pastor of ye church at Sweffland ; and Mr. John Beart, Pastor of ye Church at Bury. All which Pastors and Elders gave the right hand of fellowship to him at ye close of the day. Mr. Plumstead, of Wrentham, sent us also his assent, wishing ye blessing of God upon our undertaking ; so also did Mr. T. Rowe and Mr. Nisbitt, of London, who could not be here. Mr. Stackhouse, of Norwich, sent us a letter wishing successe and blessing."

During Mr. Glandfield's ministry the congregation considerably increased, and it was thought necessary to build. In 1718, they

* There is a fine portrait of Mr. Langston in the Hall at Tacket Street, erected a few years ago as a memorial to his name ; a copy of this portrait hangs in Mansfield College, Oxford, and a good engraving of it in the Evangelical Magazine, 1801.

bought a house in Tankard (Tacket) Street, in which the minister for the time being, during 150 years, resided, and a large piece of ground behind it, on which they erected a meeting house. For the period in which it was erected it was a large and commodious building. It measured forty-five by forty feet, and was capable of seating nearly 800 people. The roof was supported by two large wooden pillars which had previously done service as the masts of a man of war ; these were presented by a Mr. Barnard, a merchant of the town. From the church records it is evident that Mr. Glandfield was never permitted to preach in the new building ; after a long and painful illness he passed away on September 10th, 1720, just a week before the new chapel was opened.

During his sole pastorate of sixteen years and a half, seventy-five members were admitted to the church, and it is noted that Mr. Tho. Wyncott and Mr. Joseph Wyatt were deacons when Mr. Glandfield came, and that the Rev. Mr. Goodchild, of Yarmouth, and the Rev. Mr. Jonathan Mills, of Guestwick, " sit down with and are under the pastoral care of Mr. Glandfield." Among the sisters were Mrs. Langston, relict of ye deceased Pastor ; and Mrs. Clarke, Mrs. Cole, and Goodw. Boyden, of Copdock, three sisters to the Rev. Mr. Goodchild, and Mrs. Goodchild.

" Att a church meeting the 26th of October, 1720, the church gave a call to Mr. Tho. Milway, att Kettering * to the pastoral office in the church in the following words, and signed as under written by the Brethren of ye church.

' To the Rev. Mr. Tho. Milway, att Kettering.

' Dear Sir,

The sovereign Lord of life and death having call'd to rest from his labours and afflictions here our late dear Pastor, the Rev. and worthy Mr. Benjamin Glandfield, the Congregational Church of Christ at Ipswich are thereby left as sheep without a shepherd. We the members of the said Church have humbled ourselves before the Lord by fasting and prayer, imploring his direction under this solemn dispensation, and do think our present duty is the endeavouring to fill up that relation by calling one duly qualified for the pastoral office. And having several times had experience of the excellent gifts and graces God in His mercy hath bestowed on you, we cannot but acknowledge how generally acceptable they are to this church and auditory. And having had several informations of your present circumstances at Kettering, the way being plain and easy for a removal, and considering that your sentiment with us in the pastoral office is likely to be of great service in the interest of the Church in these parts, and for the uniting and settling of this church, which otherwise is likely to fall into great confusion. Therefore we, the brethren

of the church aforesaid, at a meeting on the 26th of October, 1720, do hereby call and desire you to take the pastoral office in this church, praying the Lord, the great Shepherd of the sheep, to direct, incline, and settle you with us ; unto whose divine providence we commit this great affair, trusting the Lord will enable us to perform those duties required of us. We desire you, at as convenient a time as possible, to return answer to our desires and call, which will oblige, Dear Sir, your most affectionate friends and servants in the Lord.

Signed Tho. Wyncoll } Deacons.
Joseph Wyate }

And also by seventeen brethren."

Mr. Milway relates his acceptance of the call and his settlement as follows : " The tenth day of August, 1721, was a day set apart for solemn prayer to inspire a blessing on my pastoral labours ; at which time the church renewed their unanimous call, and I testified my acceptance of it. Of my reverend brethren there were present Mr. Wickes, who began with prayers and spake unto the people ; Mr. Hurst, who followed him in prayer ; Mr. Hurrion, who preached very suitably from Heb. xiii., 17 ; Mr. Ward, who pray'd after sermon ; Mr. John Saunders pray'd next ; Mr. Robert Wright concluded in prayer. Mr. Meadows, Mr. Choyce, Mr. Wood, Mr. Williams, Mr. Kervin Wright, Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Manning, Mr. Foster, all these joined with us. We have good grounds to hope the Lord was with us, and did assist in the work, and that a spirit of supplication was poured out upon us. For which abundant mercy may we bless him for ever ; and may a gracious God say to Pastor and People : From this time will I bless you. Amen and Amen."

One hundred and twenty brethren and sisters joined in the " call," and " distinctly and one by one gave their consent to my taking the pastoral charge."

Mr. Milway did not long continue to occupy the pastorate of this church. He " died ye Lord's Day, May 31st, 1724, in ye morning." During this brief pastorate of two and a half years thirty-two persons were admitted into the church. But brief as this ministry was it was not without its troubles. Two members of the church who became disaffected with his ministry carried themselves so offensively towards him that the church excluded them for their disorderly conduct. Shortly after Mr. Milway's decease one of them acknowledged his mistakes, and expressed his sorrow for his conduct, and was restored to fellowship.

At this juncture the attention of the Church was directed to the

* Son of Mr. Milway, of Bury.

Rev. William Notcutt. He was the son of Mr. James Notcutt, of Wrington, in Somersetshire, and was born in the year 1672. He was educated at the expense of a friend, and afterwards placed under the tuition of the Rev. William Payne, of Saffron Walden. In the year 1705 he was ordained pastor of a church at Thaxted, in Essex, where he continued nearly twenty years. Soon after his settlement he married Martha the daughter of his late tutor, with whom he lived affectionately for fifty-three years.

The church at Tacket Street sent messengers to Thaxted "to desire him to come and preach before them; and he having complied with their request," they gave him a unanimous call to be their pastor, which he accepted, October, 1724. He relates that:

"The 10th December was set apart as a day of solemn prayer to implore ye blessing of God upon ye ministry of this place. Mr. Williams and Mr. Wood prayed and Mr. Ward preached on 2 Cor. iv., 5, and I closed the exercise. The ministers of London and ye country approving of ye church's choice, though the season forebad their appearance."

An extended account of Mr. Notcutt and a list of his works is given in the Evangelical Magazine, August, 1820, where there is also a copy of the inscription on his tomb. A number of his works, in print and in MSS., are in the possession of the Tacket Street Church, and a fine portrait of him hangs in the Langston Hall. Mrs. Notcutt died December 27th, 1755, aged 77 years. Mr. Gordon preached a funeral sermon for her from Rev. xiv., 13. Her husband only survived her by a few months.

After thirty years of strenuous service, "several infirmities attending his advanced age" rendered it desirable that a co-pastor should be appointed, and "the church agreed to call their brother, William Gordon, who had assisted in the ministry for above two years before." They gave him the call July 31st, 1754, and he accepted it. He had previously been dismissed from a church in London. Mr. Gordon records that:

"The 9th October following was fixt upon for his ordination. the following ministers engaged. Mr. Burnet, of Witham, pray'd; Mr. Hextal, of Sudbury, received the confession and the like; Mr. Cornell, of Colchester, prayed; Mr. Gibbons, of London, preached; Mr. Ford, of Castle Hedingham, prayed; Mr. King, of London, gave the charge; and I closed the exercise. There were present also Mr. Bingham, of Dedham; Mr. Blonfield, of Nayland; Mr. Cornell, of Woodbridge; Mr. Toms, Hadleigh; Mr. Webb, Rendham; and Mr. Wood, Framlingham."

Mr. Notcutt died July 17th, 1756, aged 84 years, having filled the pastorate of this church for nearly thirty-two years. The Rev. E. Cornell, of Colchester, preached his funeral sermon from

Heb. xiii., 7, which was printed. When Mr. Notcutt entered upon the pastorate there were 128 members, and 78 more were admitted during his ministry ; but death and other causes had produced such changes that, when Mr. Gordon succeeded to the pastorate the number of members was reduced to fifty-three. Mr. Gordon was sole pastor eight years, during which time but six members were admitted. In 1764 Mr. Gordon resigned his charge here, and removed to London, having accepted a call to Gravel Lane, Wapping. The reference in the church book to his removal is as follows :—

“ The Rev. William Gordon being invited to take upon him the pastoral charge of the Church of Christ, late under the care of the Rev. Dr. Jennings, of London, deceased, and having sought direction from above, and consulted friends, came to a conclusion to comply with what appeared to him to be the voice of Providence, and on June 3rd, 1764, quitted the pastoral office, and received his dismissal, in order to a removal.”

Mr. Gordon's London Pastorate lasted about ten years, when he went to America, and during the stormy times of the war of Independence he espoused the American cause, and became private secretary to General Washington. For this act he was outlawed, and a price was set upon his head. After the declaration of peace he returned to England, and wrote a history of the American War. In the year 1786 we find him and his wife living at Mr. Field's, No. 95, Newgate Street, London. He was then seeking a settlement, and hearing that Dr. Stanton, of Hapton, was at the point of death, he endeavoured to secure the interest of the trustees in his favour. In a private letter to Mr. Joseph Parker, of Mettingham, dated November 28th, in that year, he says :

“ Some of the gentlemen, perhaps, may not approve of my political conduct in past years, but I am now too far advanced to concern myself in politics. Some may not approve of my religious tenets ; but I cannot with propriety be styled a fire-hot bigot, and am for allowing others the same liberty in religious matters which I claim for myself.”

His application did not succeed, but we find that he was pastor at St. Neot's from 1789 to 1802. The writer has a bundle of interesting letters written to an Ipswich friend, in which he gives an account of his changeful and interesting life, with many quaint comments on current events and personal experiences. On quitting St. Neot's he came back to Ipswich, and, after assisting Mr. Atkinson during severe illness, he and his wife were admitted into the Tacket Street Church, November 4th, 1802. Here he spent the

remainder of his life. He was buried in the Tacket Street Chapel yard. His gravestone bears the following inscription :

Rev. William Gordon, D.D.,

Died 19th October, 1807,

Aged 87.

His wife died in 1816.

The next pastor was Rev. David Edwards, who, singularly enough, also came from St. Neot's. The account of his settlement is as follows :

"On Wednesday, May 22nd, 1765, the Rev. Mr. David Edwards took upon him the pastoral charge of the Church of Christ assembling at the meeting house in *Tankard* Street, Ipswich. The members testified and recognised their call by lifting up the right hand. Previous to this day's work there was a dismission sent from the Church of Christ at St. Neot's, in Huntingdonshire, where Mr. Edwards stood related as Pastor and member, to the Church at Ipswich. The ministers who engaged in the work of this day were the Rev. Messrs. Toms, Blomfield, Harmer, Howe, and Dr. Wood, of Norwich. Mr. Toms began with an introductory discourse concerning the work of the day, and read the certificate of Mr. Edwards' ordination at Tetbury in Gloucestershire ; then desired the church to recognise the call they had given, in the presence of God and the congregation, by lifting up of the right hand ; then called upon Mr. Edwards to testify his acceptance of that call, which was accordingly done ; Mr. Toms then prayed. Immediately succeeded Mr. Blomfield in prayer. Then Mr. Harmer preached on the words ; "We are ambassadors for Christ," etc. Then Mr. Howe prayed, and Dr. Wood concluded with a comprehensive, solemn, animating prayer. We sung three times. There were present, in all, sixteen ministers and a very crowded audience, and I hope many could say that it was a good day with them."

In the year following his ordination, he was called upon to engage in a very extraordinary and unexpected service. Two men had been convicted of house-breaking, and were sent to Ipswich jail to await their execution. Mr. Edwards was requested to visit them ; he did so, and found them "extremely ignorant of man's state by nature, and of the way of salvation, but they made a frank confession of their crime, and acknowledged the justice of their sentence." He spent two hours with them on the first occasion and, at their request, visited them again ; as the results of these visits they were brought to a penitent state of mind. They had heard that Mr. Edwards had prepared a sermon for them, and desired them to attend ; this was a mistake, but notwithstanding they obtained permission to go to the chapel where Mr. Edwards was

conducting a church meeting. A report of the purpose got abroad, and many persons came to the meeting, upon which it was thought most proper that the church business should be laid aside, and that Mr. Edwards should go into the pulpit. He did so, and after singing and prayer, "the prisoners came in with their fetters and shackles on." Mr. Edwards gives us a vivid description of the whole scene. He says :

"Many were moved at the sight. As for myself, I was obliged to stop for some time, to give vent to tears. When I recovered, I gave out part of a hymn, suitable to the occasion, then prayed. The subject of discourse was "This is a faithful saying," etc. The poor prisoners shed abundance of tears while I was explaining the several parts of the text, and especially when I turned and directed myself immediately to them.

"The house was thronged, and I suppose, not a dry eye in the whole place ; nothing but weeping and sorrow. They then desired I would see them in the evening, which I did, and called upon Mr. Brindle in the way. The old gentleman went along with me to the prison, and was one who prayed with them with much fervour and enlargement of heart. We spent nearly two hours with them, and a crowd of people was present.

"At parting they earnestly intreated me to attend them to the place of execution the next day. I told them I could not bear it. Mr. Brindle likewise observed that it was an unprecedented thing ; that a dissenting minister was never known to do it in this country. To which they calmly replied, "I hope, sir, it will be no disgrace." I told them that, as the minister of the parish was to give them the Sacrament next morning, it was his province to attend them to the place of execution, or some clergy of the town. I left them after I had explained to them the nature of the Lord's Supper, pointing out the qualifications of a sincere communicant, etc.

"About ten o'clock next morning a messenger came from the prisoners, saying they desired I would meet them at the place of execution. I did not at first feel willing to comply, but begged they would get some clergyman to go. By and by another messenger came to tell me that not one clergyman in the town would go ; that the practice had for some time been laid aside. Soon after I heard they were gone, Mr. Horton, of Bentley, my eldest son, and I, followed in a post chaise to Rush-moor. We overtook them about half-a-mile out of the town ; the cart stopped, and the prisoners looked back wistfully. I got out of the chaise, and into the cart, and sat down by them. I found them, I would hope, in the very frame of the publican, especially Francis. Their language, like his, was 'God be merciful !' I conversed with them, and then prayed most of the way ; but my place was so uneasy, that, after

I had gone about a mile, I ordered the cart to stop, and stepped into the chaise again. Soon after we came to the fatal tree. I then got out, and inquiring for the Sheriff, was told his deputy was there; to whom I applied to know how long the prisoners had to live. He courteously replied, there was no time particularly fixed. 'Sir,' said I, 'the prisoners are both of them young, and there are abundance of young people present; will you suffer me to give them a word of exhortation on this melancholly occasion?' He answered 'With all my heart.' I asked him what time he would allow me, to which he replied 'Take your own time; your time shall be mine.' Once more I got up on the cart; but what a situation it was! I stood with one foot on one coffin, the other upon the other coffin, two dying men, who were to die a shameful death, by my side, the fatal tree before me, and thousands of men and women covering a great part of the heath, some in carriages, numbers on horseback, multitudes on foot. It put me in mind of the day of judgment!

"After I had found a little composure in weeping, I gave out that part of the hymn at the end of Sternhold and Hopkins, entitled "The Lamentation of a Sinner," which was sung to Windsor tune, then prayed, and fixed upon those words as the subject of discourse, "Flee youthful lusts." I applied to the multitude, then to the prisoners, till the tears flowed from almost every eye. You, sir, can better imagine than I describe what universal weeping spread itself over the face of the people. There was the utmost decency observed in every part. There were no tumults or talking, but a solemnity in every countenance highly becoming the occasion. But, oh! could you have seen the prisoners prostrate, it would have been a scene indeed! It cannot be well expressed; groans and tears cannot be printed or wrote. I then kneeled down and prayed, then gave my last advice, told them to take time, and concluded with the Benediction; then hasted to my carriage with my heart full enough. The prisoners then spoke; Francis, in particular, spoke of salvation by grace admirably well. He also intreated us all to beware of the beginning of sin, lest they should come to a similar fate with himself and his fellow sufferer. Soon after the executioner did his office. You know, sir, it is difficult to judge of such people's conversion to God; but these had some promising marks. They are gone!"

In the following year the church book records an intensely interesting incident, indicating the broad sympathies of church and minister with attempts to spread the Kingdom of God beyond their own borders.

"September 28th, 1767. Yesterday the Rev. Dr. Whittaker, of Norwich, in America, and the Rev. Mr. Occom, an Indian

minister, preached at the meeting house in Tankard Street, to a very numerous congregation. They came over to solicit the charitable contributions of all well disposed Christians in Great Britain towards carrying on the Academy under the care of the Rev. Dr. Wheelock, in Lebanon, Connecticut (for the Indian people) . . . Mr. Ocom was brought up in all the darkness of paganism, but, by the Providence of God, was brought to be acquainted with some English people who loved ye gospel, and was deeply impressed with his lost and undone state, and the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ. . . . He discovered an aptness to learn, and Dr. Wheelock took him under his care, . . . and as he appeared to be a serious, solid, pious man of considerable gifts, he was ordained and sent to preach the gospel among his own tribes, and has met with success, the Lord worked by him and many are called through his ministry. . . . This charity is recommended by Sir William Johnson, the King's Commander in Chief, besides six of his Majesty's Governors in America, etc. . . . This may be looked upon as one of the greatest charities yt was ever proposed to the English nation, as it is big with the most important consequences, and many people of all denominations have countenanced it."

The result of this appeal was a contribution of eighty pounds to the funds required for carrying out this work. The total result of the appeal to the country at large was about £9,500 ; a fairly large sum for those days.

Mr. Edwards continued in the pastoral office hereabout twenty-six years, when considerable dissatisfaction manifested itself, and at length an act of high handed authority, intended to screen a member of his family, brought matters to a crisis. The church would not submit to it. A compromise was attempted, but an injudicious act on the part of the pastor prevented its being carried into effect. The result was that the church, by a small majority, requested Mr. Edwards to resign. He apologised for the course he had pursued, "but it was then thought too late to restore the peace of the society." The church promised him an annuity of £50 per annum, and he resigned November 6th, 1791, but continued to preach until Christmas.

As might have been expected, the action of the majority in demanding the minister's resignation occasioned much heart burning among the minority, and ultimately led to the secession of a number from the fellowship of the church. On December 25th of that year these met for worship in a private house ; they afterwards fitted up a meeting house in Dairy Lane. A new congregation was thus formed, an account of which will follow in due course.

The Rev. Charles Atkinson, of Homerton Academy, was invited to supply the pulpit. He preached the first time at Ipswich, January 29th, 1792, and on July 22nd, was unanimously invited to the pastorate. He was dismissed to this church from the church at Bury on September 16th, in the following terms :

“Whereas the Rev. Charles Atkinson hath signified to us your having called him to . . . the pastoral office among you, and hath requested, in order thereto, a dismission from us to whom he hath long stood related as a member ; we do hereby testify that whilst with us he hath been dear to us, and hath filled up that relation with comfort to us, and in a manner becoming the gospel of Christ ; and we do, with the warmest affection, most earnestly recommend this our dear brother to your fellowship and prayers, and . . . pray he may, through the blessing of God, be rendered as dear to you in the pastoral character as he hath been to us as a fellow member, and that God may so help him to preach among you the unsearchable riches of Christ, that many may be brought to the faith of Him, . . . and in testimony of our love to him and to you we do, in the behalf, and with the consent of the whole church, hereunto set our names.

Thomas Waldegrave, Pastor.

Geo. Paul

Abrm. Maling

} Deacons.

“Mr. Atkinson gave the church a brief account of his conversion and his conduct in entering the ministry, referring them to his preaching for his sentiments. He was then received into the church as a member, and immediately called to the pastoral office, when he delivered a short address respecting its importance, and earnestly requesting that the members would pray for him, he accepted the call. The deacon, Mr. George Notcutt, then prayed, and the Pastor dismissed the church.”

October 23rd was the day appointed for his ordination, and, as in the meantime, the only deacon of the church died, Mr. John Hall was appointed to speak in the name of the church.

“On the day appointed, Mr. Wearing, of Rendham, began the public worship with prayer ; then read some passages in the Epistle to Timothy. Rev. John Palmer introduced the ordination service with a suitable discourse ; then asked the usual questions. Mr. John Hall answered for the church. The Rev. C. Atkinson having answered the several questions put to him, and delivered his confession of faith, the Rev. G. Hobbs prayed the ordination prayer ; the Rev. Thos. Waldegrave delivered the charge from Matt. xvi., 15 ; the Rev. S. Lowell prayed ; the Rev. Wm. Bentley Crathern preached from Acts ii., 42 ; the Rev. Wm. Hickman concluded with prayer ; the Rev. Jas.

Knight read one of the hymns. The service began at 10. o'clock, and ended but little before three."

During the long ministry of Mr. Atkinson several events are recorded which are of more than passing interest.

The opinions of members of Independent Churches sometimes change upon the subject of baptism. It was so in the case of a member here in the year 1793, and as she requested her dismissal in an orderly way, the church granted it; and whilst expressing their sorrow that it was necessary for her to separate from their communion, they nevertheless say:

"Approving of your conduct whilst related to this church, and of the peaceable and orderly manner in which you have conducted yourself in separating from it, we comply with your request, and dismiss you from the relation in which you stand to this particular Church of Christ, with earnest prayer to God for His blessing upon you."

In some other cases where the separation had been effected in a clandestine manner, a dismission, or transfer, was refused because of the disorderly course pursued.

In this age of Free Church Councils and interdenominational fellowship, it is rather curious and interesting to meet with such a record as the following:

"In 1798, January 5th, a member of the Wesleyan Society was proposed for occasional communion. This being the first instance of the kind, it was stated particularly to the church, and they thought that if the Pastor was satisfied respecting their character, such persons should be admitted to occasional communion."

Such a resolution would be regarded, at that time, as the indication of a large stretch of charity, which, in some minds, would not fail to raise grave doubts as to its wisdom and orderliness. We have travelled far since then, and are surely much nearer the realization of the Master's prayer for the oneness of all His disciples.

In the closing years of the eighteenth century the larger mission of the church, and her responsibility to the great heathen world, began to dawn upon the minds of many of the leaders up and down the country. This larger vision took shape in the founding of many of the great missionary societies which, in subsequent years, have done so much to transform the world. Among these societies the London Missionary Society has occupied a foremost position. Undenominational in its character, as it has ever been, it has appealed with special force to congregational churches; and among these churches has not only found the majority of its missionaries, but the bulk of its financial support. Among the pioneers of this great society Tacket Street is worthily represented.

On the 27th of July, 1796, Daniel Bowell was set apart by this church for missionary work, and sailed in the *Duff* for Otaheite in the following September; he was one of the early martyrs of the London Missionary Society, having met with a violent death at the hands of the natives. Bennington Hail Payne, appointed printer to the mission at Bellary, and Lydia Atkinson, approved as a suitable partner in life, were married and dismissed from this church April 13th, 1826. The pastor, their father, addressed them and the congregation from Luke xviii., 29, 30. Theophilus Atkinson was ordained a missionary here May 19th, 1829; his father, the aged and infirm pastor, gave the charge from Exod. xxxiii., 15; and some years afterwards, and after the death of Mr. Atkinson, on the 3rd of October, in 1837, the Rev. Timothy Atkinson, late pastor of the church at Hounslow, was here dedicated a missionary to Quebec under the sanction of the Colonial Missionary Society; from thence he removed to Pacaltsdorp, Cape of Good Hope. With the revival of the Missionary spirit, a greater desire for the spiritual welfare of the inhabitants of the neglected villages of the country began to manifest itself. In the old church book we read:

“ July 30th, 1797, several brethren of the church went out for the first time into the villages around, to instruct such as they could find disposed to receive them; and it was agreed that they should go from time to time, subject to the control of the church, and that they should meet to consult on the Lord’s Day at noon.”

This was simply carrying into effect the recommendation of the County Association which met in 1794.

During Mr. Atkinson’s pastorate, on July 5th, 1805, William Notcutt was received as a member of the Church. In May, 1811, he was dismissed to be pastor of the church at Ashley and Wilbarston, in Northamptonshire. In October, 1825, the trustees and subscribers invited him to become evening preacher and assistant to the Pastor, which invitation he accepted. On March 22nd, 1829, Mr. Notcutt, with the full consent of Mr. Atkinson, who had a short time before been visited with a paralytic affliction, was invited to become co-pastor of the church, and on the 1st day of May following he accepted the invitation. He was the nephew of Mr. Atkinson, and great grandson of the Rev. William Notcutt, a former pastor of this church.

“ January 13, 1830, the Rev. Charles Atkinson died, deeply regretted after 38 years of successful labours. He was interred in a vault in the ground belonging to the meeting; Mr. Ward, of Stowmarket, preached his funeral sermon from Heb. xiii., 7.”

On the 6th April, in the same year, Mr. Notcutt was recognised as sole pastor.

In 1853, Mr. Notcutt felt the necessity of having an assistant, and Mr. John Pearson, a student from Lancashire College, came for a short time ; but on March 2nd, 1854, he resigned, and eventually gave up the ministry.

On the 20th of the same month Mr. Notcutt gave notice that he would terminate his ministry on the second Sunday in April.

“ On that day our pastor preached his last sermon from 2 Cor. iv., 7 ; and with that terminated a service to this church of more than eight and twenty years.

A Church Meeting was called to consider the situation, at which the following resolution was unanimously agreed to, and recorded in the Church book :

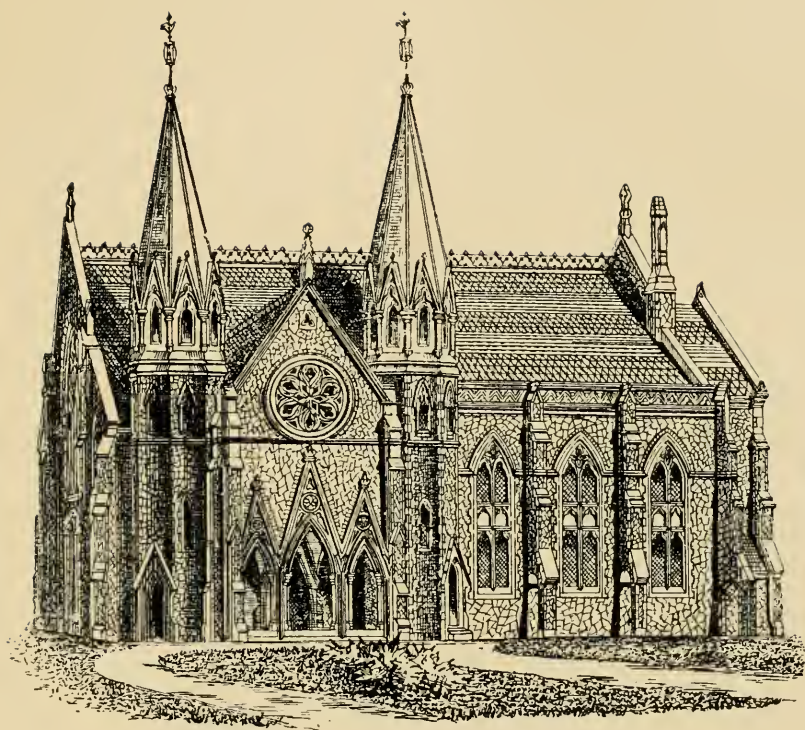
“ That this church receives with deep sorrow the resignation of our justly esteemed pastor, the Rev. W. Notcutt, and in accepting the same desires to express, in the most cordial manner, our high esteem for him as a Christian minister, our sincere attachment to himself and family, and our ardent thankfulness to the great Head of the Church for all the advantages we have derived from his long pastorate of twenty-eight years, and from his faithful and affectionate labours among us. We rejoice in the good effected thereby, both in reference to those who yet live as well as to those also who have fallen asleep, in souls brought to Christ through his instrumentality and trained up for heaven. And in retiring into private life we most devoutly and earnestly pray that the best of blessings may attend his declining years, that the promises and hopes of that gospel he has so long preached unto others may cheer and sustain his soul, and that his heart may be comforted with the assurance ‘ that he has not run in vain, neither laboured in vain ’ ; and when we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, may he with us all be enabled to give up our account with joy and not with grief.”

Mr. Notcutt was born at Deptford, July 20th, 1789, and died January 26, 1858, in the 69th year of his age, and was buried in the Tacket Street burial ground.

After Mr. Notcutt's resignation the pulpit was supplied for some months with several ministers till July 29th, 1855, when the Rev. William Clarkson, who had returned from the mission field in India, accepted the pastorate. Mr. Clarkson's ministry at Tacket Street was not a happy one. He brought to his home work conceptions of the pastorate gathered on the mission field which did not fit into the conditions of life prevailing in the homeland, and in little more than a year he resigned. He held pastorates subsequently

at Folkestone, Bideford, and Croydon. He passed away at Croydon in December, 1897, aged 80.

The next minister was the Rev. Eliezer Jones, who came from Plymouth. Mr. Jones was a man of exceptional gifts, and wielded a large influence not only in the pulpit, but in the life of the town. He was born at Denbigh in 1809. His father, Dr. A. Jones, was for many years the congregational minister at Bangor, one of a band of famous Welsh preachers who made the Welsh pulpit of the 18th century illustrious by their Celtic fervour and native eloquence. The family having removed from Bangor to Deptford young Jones attended the School at Lewisham, and subsequently entered Carmarthen College to study for the Christian ministry. His first charge was at Castle Street, Swansea, where he was ordained in 1828. Thence he removed to Rodborough Tabernacle, Gloucestershire. His third pastorate was at Oxford, where he settled in 1840. It was while at Oxford that his powers as an orator and debater revealed themselves. It was the period of the great revival in the Church of England, which ushered in the Tractarian movement. The names of Newman, Pusey, and Keble were among the most famous in the land, as the leaders of a great religious revolution. All eyes were turned to the University City. Living at the storm centre of this movement, Mr. Jones threw himself, with all his Welsh fervour, into the contest. The fires kindled in this conflict never ceased to glow throughout his life. He was above all things a staunch Protestant, and an implacable enemy of all Sacerdotalism and priestcraft. From Oxford he removed, in 1844, to Norley, Plymouth; at that time a position of commanding influence in West of England Congregationalism. In 1856 he accepted the call to Tacket Street. The church at that time worshipped in an old and unattractive building hidden away behind some houses and only approached by means of a narrow court. Mr. Jones made it a condition of his acceptance of the pastorate that a new and more commodious building should be erected. It was with many misgivings and not a little opposition that the condition was accepted. The old building had been the home of the church from 1720, and had gathered around it the most sacred memories and hallowed associations. But the old must give place to the new, and so, amid many regrets, the old building was demolished in 1857, and the present handsome structure was erected on the site, and opened for public worship January 27th, 1858. A pathetic incident is connected with the opening service. It was decided that the first sermon in the new church should be preached by the old minister, Mr. Notcutt, but man proposes and God disposes. On the day before the building was opened Mr. Notcutt



TACKET STREET—PRESENT DAY.

passed to his rest, so that the first service which had been so long anticipated, was shadowed by bereavement.

For 15 years Mr. Jones ministered in the new building to a large and influential congregation, until failure of sight and increasing years urged him to relinquish his position. He resigned in May, 1873. He resided for a time at Stoke Newington, and from there he removed to Acton, where he died July 25th, 1883, aged 72 years. His ministry is still remembered in Ipswich. In the following year (1874) the Rev. Valentine W. Mayberry entered upon the pastorate. Mr. Mayberry was a native of Pontypool, born 1843. In 1861 he joined the Congregational Church at Monmouth. Soon after joining the church he began to conduct cottage services in the district, and under the direction of his minister, the Rev. W. Campbell, M.A., his thoughts were turned to the larger sphere of the regular ministry. From early years he had been an enthusiast for Foreign Missions, and when he had made his decision to devote his life to public Christian work it was to the mission field his thoughts almost instinctively turned. He offered himself to the L.M.S. for foreign service, was accepted, and sent for preparation to the Rev. R. C. Pritchett, of Weston-super-Mare. But circumstances over which he had no control compelled him to abandon his intention. In 1863 he entered Western College to prepare for the home ministry. His first pastorate was the small church of Stoke-sub-Hamden, where he was ordained in 1868. In 1873 he accepted the call to Tacket Street. It was no small task for a young man to follow such a veteran as Eliezer Jones. Yet he faced it bravely and won his way to the hearts and deepest affections of the people. His simple piety, his fine spiritual insight and culture, made him a welcome visitor in the sick room and an attractive friend in the home. He was especially popular with the young, of whom large numbers were attracted to his ministry. His physical constitution, however, was not strong enough to bear the strain of a large and exacting pastorate. On Wednesday, November 1st, 1876, when visiting a member of his congregation at a distance, he caught a chill from which he never recovered. On Thursday, November 17th, he passed away at the early age of 34. He was buried on the following Monday amid remarkable demonstrations of respect and sympathy from all sections of the community. His name and memory are still fragrant with many of the friends at Tacket St., who knew and loved him. Mr. Mayberry was succeeded by the Rev. William Scott, who entered upon the pastorate in 1878. Mr. Scott was a native of Glasgow, and held the position of Schoolmaster in a Presbyterian School at Wigan, Lancashire. Eventually entering the ministry he became assistant to Dr. Macfadyan, of Manchester, having charge of a branch church at Greenheys. In 1874

he removed to Edmonton and Tottenham ; thence to Tacket Street. Although his ministry only covered a period of four years he left his mark upon the church and county. He drew large congregations, mainly of young people, many of whom are doing fine Christian service still, as deacons and leaders in church and Sunday school. In 1882 Mr. Scott removed to Hull to undertake the important pastorate of Albion Church ; from there he went, in 1889, to Australia. Returning to England in 1897 he settled for a time at Eastbourne. Here he suffered a mental breakdown, and removed to Hornsea, where he died April 15th, 1905.

For two years the pastorate remained vacant, when a call was given to, and accepted by, the Rev. William Hubbard, of Manchester. Mr. Hubbard was born at Norwich, July 19th, 1840. Compelled, through circumstances, to leave school at an early age, yet his keen intellect and almost insatiable passion for knowledge enabled him to overcome the disadvantages of a defective early education. His young life was spent among the Free Methodists, and at an early age he decided for the ministry. At the age of 21 he was accepted as an accredited minister among the Free Methodists and travelled successively in the Sheffield, Bradford, Lincoln, Blackburn, and Manchester circuits. At the last named place his exceptional pulpit power and cultured style attracted the attention of some of the members of the Oldham Road Church, at that time one of the leading churches in Manchester. He was eventually invited to the Pastorate, and from 1877 to 1885 he wielded a large influence among the Congregational Churches of that city. His ministry at Tacket Street was marked with considerable success. He gathered round him a thoughtful and cultured congregation. In the pulpit and on the platform his power as an incisive speaker was recognized. One of the outstanding events in his ministry was the celebration of the Bi-centenary of the founding of the church, which attracted considerable notice in the country and aroused much interest in the town. The programme of these meetings was most elaborate and varied, and included, among others, such names as Principal Cave, Drs. Barrett, Mackennal, Horton, and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes. The celebration covered four days and aroused a great deal of enthusiasm. Among the items of interest a letter from the Congregational Church at Ipswich, Massachusetts, is worthy of permanent record. It reads as follows :

“ At a meeting of the first Congregational Church in Ipswich, Mass., held September 23rd, 1886, it was unanimously voted to adopt the following communication, and forward it to the Congregational Church in Tacket Street, Ipswich, England :—

“ To the Church at Tacket Street, Ipswich, England, greeting. The intelligence has reached us that your Congregational Church

of old English Ipswich is to celebrate her bi-centennial, and the first Congregational Church of the younger New England hastens to send her congratulations, and to join in the fellowship of the occasion.

"Two years ago—August 16th, 1884—we reached the 250th anniversary of the town. The next day—the 17th—being Sunday the first parish also recognised with appropriate services the kindly Providence that had guided this church through two centuries and a half of varied but interesting history."

"And though the Congregational Church of our mother town, is, it seems, fifty years our junior, yet *we* feel more like the younger, as we have always had a *child-like* regard for the old town over the sea, whose name was so long ago bestowed upon us by our General Court.

"Our pleasant town and church were gathered in the years 1633-34. The early people desired the place to be called Ipswich. The ship that brought them came from that town, the Francis and Elizabeth sailed from that port in the spring of 1634, and transported many of them. The passengers collected there from Newbury, Haverhill, Rowley, Dedham, Groton, Boston, etc. And while waiting for favourable winds and tides, the goodly people of your Ipswich were exceedingly mindful of their comfort, and bade them the final Godspeed. Sailing away with these benedictions, and filled with the pious memories of these prayers and influences, the Colonists desired our General Court of Massachusetts to incorporate them as Ipswich; and we believe we have never yet dishonoured the name of our old English mother, neither have we forgotten the rock—Christ Jesus—upon which your church and ours were founded.

"And not only did many of our people sail from Ipswich, but our first minister, the Rev. Nathaniel Ward, was closely allied to your old town. His own brother, the Rev. Samuel Ward, was the minister of St. Mary Tower from 1603 to 1639, when he died, and was buried within its walls, and his grave is known to this day. The Puritan spirit of Samuel gave him a tender sympathy with his brother Nathaniel, and with the ship's company who were sailing away to a new life in a new world. We have read of this Samuel as a man who, like Paul, had the divine gift of spiritual fatherhood and counsellor unto many of his generation, and whose generous spirit gave him breadth of love and labour.

"And our second minister was the Rev. Nathaniel Rogers. He was the son of the Rev. John Rogers, of Dedham, England, and came to us in 1638. The Rev. John, of Dedham, was like a brother to Samuel Ward, of Ipswich, England, and Nathaniel

Ward, of Ipswich, Massachusetts. For in his orphan boyhood he was nurtured and trained by the very same mother—the wise and good Susan Ward, afterwards Rogers—and there was a life-long and unbroken affinity between them all. Four generations of that Rogers family filled our pulpit from 1638 to 1776, a period of 138 years, and thus the memories and traditions come down to us full of interest, and keep the grasp still firm upon the mother heart of your old town.

“ Our third minister, the Rev. William Hubbard, came in his childhood from the Tendring Hundred, another section in your own neighbourhood.

“ And only five miles from us, in 1638, the Rev. Ezekiel Rogers, of Rowley, England, a step-brother of the Rev. Samuel Ward, with a company of 200, founded a new town and a new church, and named it Rowley, which church continues till this day in the simple godly way of the fathers.

“ And the Rev. John Ward, a nephew of Samuel, in 1641, settled another town, which was called Haverhill, in honour of the birthplace of the Wards.

“ All these churches were organised and continue as Congregational. The relations, therefore, of the Ministry and the people of your ancient town and its neighbourhood with the new settlements in our own and its neighbourhood, were so interesting and kindly, that it is not strange that your old and honoured name was transferred to us.

“ And as the two churches have held the same religious opinions and the same manner and style of worship these two and more centuries, we can joyfully hold forth the right hand of fellowship and relationship, and give you greeting on your 200th birthday.

“ It may be interesting for you to know that our Church has become the mother of five daughters ; for the South Church of our Ipswich, and the churches of Topsfield, Essex, Hamilton, and Linebrook, localities upon our immediate borders, are all the outgrowth of the little colony that sailed from your own port 252 years ago.

“ Once more then, accept our fervent congratulations on the occasion which you now celebrate.

“ And be assured of our best wishes and prayers for your temporal and spiritual prosperity.

“ In behalf of the Church,

Yours in the love of Christ,

Geo. H. Scott, Pastor.

Zena Cushing, Clerk.

Nathaniel Rogers Farley,

One of the officers of the Church.”

Mr. Hubbard's ministry continued until 1894, when the sad incident occurred which suddenly brought to a close a career of great promise. In January of that year a rapid thaw, following a severe frost, caused one of the water pipes in his house to burst, flooding the lower part of the building. Unconscious of risk Mr. Hubbard arose from his bed to make an investigation and plunged into the icy cold water. What might not have injured a robust man proved fatal to a man of delicate physique; a severe chill, followed by paralysis, was the result. For a time he suffered from loss of speech and memory. He partially rallied from the stroke, but never regained health. When it was found that he would never preach again the Church, with its traditional generosity raised a fund for his support. For many years he lived on a pathetic figure, yet always with a glad smile for old friends. On Friday, November 6th, 1903, he passed into the fuller light. The funeral service was held in Tacket Street Chapel in the presence of a large gathering of those who had known and loved him in past years. In an address delivered at the funeral by an old friend and comrade, the following words beautifully summed up the character of the man :

“ William Hubbard was a man of choice spirit, of rare power and wide sympathies; he was possessed of a nature almost transparent in clearness, and of a singularly gentle heart.”

In March, 1896, the Rev. T. J. Hosken, accepted the call of the church, and entered upon what proved a singularly happy and inspiring union. Mr. Hosken had held previous pastorates at Stockport, Charlesworth, and Burnley.

Tacket Street has always been fortunate in having a band of stalwart and devoted laymen, whose love for their church has shown itself in numerous ways, in material help and personal service. One need only mention such names as Harwood, Goddard, Fison, Grimwade, May, Paul, Conder, and others, to recall some of the most uncompromising and generous Nonconformists of East Anglia.

Soon after Mr. Hosken's settlement a movement was set on foot to provide increased accommodation to meet the needs of the young life in the church, and also to provide scope for new and growing organisations. After long and careful discussion it was decided to purchase property at the rear of the church, and to erect suitable buildings on the site. The scheme was a costly one, and but for the generous gifts of a few members of the church could not have been successfully carried through. The result of this effort was the beautiful Memorial Hall, named after John Langston, the first pastor of the church. This scheme, together with important

structural alterations in the church buildings, involved an outlay of £4,800.

The Sunday School has always been an important feature of the work at Tacket Street, and has always had the support of the most devoted men and women in the church as its officers and teachers. In recent years the new methods of the graded school have largely altered the whole complexion of Sunday school life. The leaders of the Tacket Street School have not been slow to recognise the importance and value of the new methods and demands. The old school buildings were not adapted to the necessities of a properly graded school, and in 1911-12 a scheme, outlined by Mr. R. H. Paul, the devoted superintendent, was placed before the church and congregation, for altering and enlarging the old premises. The scheme was unanimously adopted, and mainly owing to the enthusiasm with which Mr. R. H. Paul threw himself into it, was carried to a successful issue. This involved a further expenditure of £2,200, which was promptly met by the generous contributions of members of the congregation. As a result of these various efforts Tacket Street Church to-day possesses some of the finest and completest premises in the country.

In January, 1917, after 21 years pastorate, Mr. Hosken resigned, and settled at Lowestoft.

In March, 1919, the Rev. J. A. Patten, M.C., M.A., who had previously held a pastorate at Seacombe, Cheshire, and for four years had served as Chaplain to the Forces in France, entered upon the pastorate of this church, and still holds that office.

Tacket Street maintains two village causes at Nacton and Claydon, which are supplied by lay preachers from Ipswich.

ST. NICHOLAS STREET INDEPENDENT CHURCH.

We have seen that differences arose in the Tacket Street Church in connection with the enforced resignation of the Rev. David Edwards. As a result of this a number of people seceded from the church, and commenced services in a private house in St. Clement's. The account of the transactions given by the seceders is as follows :

" 1791. Owing to an unfortunate irregularity in Mr. Edwards' family, in which it was alleged that he was deficient in parental discipline, a misunderstanding arose between the pastor and the people. Several ineffectual attempts were made to heal the breach, and a separation soon followed. Mr. Edwards resigned his charge at Tacket Steet about the end of the year 1791. He afterwards settled at Wootton-under-edge, in Gloucestershire, where he died in the course of a few years.

“ His friends at Ipswich, who formed a respectable minority of the congregation, afterwards withdrew from Tacket Street, and met together for prayer at a dwellinghouse in St. Clement's, where Mr. Beaumont, of Woodbridge, occasionally preached. An opulent individual among them soon provided a more convenient place, in Dairy Lane, which was supplied by the neighbouring ministers, and several of Lady Huntingdon's connexion.

“ A church having been formed, Mr. Edward Davies became their pastor in 1783, and pursued his labours with considerable success ; but towards the latter part of his ministry the congregation greatly declined till it became nearly extinct in 1825. Mr. Davis having become possessed of the chapel in Dairy Lane, sold it to Mr. Thomas Wilson, of Highbury, for the sum of £300. After a time the meeting house, having undergone some repairs, was re-opened for public worship by the Revs. Edward Parsons and J. Stratten, of Paddington, in the month of July, 1826. From this time the place was regularly supplied by a succession of students from Highbury College, and ministers from different parts of the country, by whose labours the congregation in Dairy Lane was greatly revived and increased.

“ In the course of 1827, Mr. Henry Cresswell, another of the Highbury Students, preached for several Sabbaths with great acceptance, and received from the people a unanimous call to take the oversight of them in the Lord. Mr. Cresswell accepted the invitation, and commenced his stated labours on the first Sabbath of 1828.

“ As the chapel had fallen into other hands, it was thought advisable that the church should be re-organised. The first meeting to carry out this design was held October 17th, 1828, and two days afterwards the Rev. J. H. Cox, of Hadleigh, presided at the re-organisation, at which the Rev. Edward Davies, and the Rev. Henry Cresswell were both admitted to membership.”

Under these new conditions the congregation soon outgrew its accommodation, and the necessity was felt for larger and more convenient premises to carry on the aggressive work upon which the church had entered. Accordingly, in August, 1828, the foundation stone of a new chapel was laid in St. Nicholas Street, and the building was opened for divine worship April 30th, 1829. The special preachers on this occasion being the Rev. H. J. Roper, of Teignmouth, and the Rev. J. Stratten, of London.

The old chapel in Dairy Lane was sold to the Particular Baptists, a number of whom had seceded from Stoke in May, 1829. In 1912 the old building was pulled down, and, on the site, the present Bethesda Chapel was erected, and opened for divine worship in 1913.

Mr. Cresswell was ordained in the new St. Nicholas Street Chapel on Tuesday, June 23rd, 1829, on which occasion the following ministers engaged : the Rev. J. Sloper, of Beccles, read the Scriptures and prayed ; the Rev. A. Bromiley, of Needham Market, prayed ; the Rev. W. Ward, of Stowmarket, delivered the introductory discourse, and asked the usual questions ; the Rev. J. M. Ray, of Sudbury, offered the ordination prayer ; the Rev. R. Philip, of Kingsland, delivered the charge from Heb. xiii., 17 ; the Rev. W. Notcutt, of Ipswich, concluded by prayer ; and in the evening the Rev. J. Herrick, of Colchester, preached to the people. Several other ministers from the town and neighbourhood were present and assisted. The Rev. H. Cresswell resigned his pastorate in 1831, and removed to Canterbury, on which occasion about thirty one persons requested their dismissal from the church.

The Rev. John Whitby, from Highbury College, received a unanimous invitation to the pastorate in February, 1832, which he accepted on the 18th of March, though only twelve persons then remained in membership. Mr. Whitby's ministry seems to have been of that quiet earnest character which the church specially needed at that time. He continued in the pastorate for twenty-one years, during which time 451 members were received into fellowship. The congregations largely increased under his ministry, necessitating the erection of galleries and other alterations at a cost of £1,000.

It has been said "Happy is the nation that has no history." According to this maxim Mr. Whitby's ministry should have been a happy one. There was little of a striking character in it. It is true he had troubles at the beginning of his pastorate. Though but twelve members remained, it has been said it would have been better had there been fewer. Malcontents evidently were practising the same tactics on Mr. Whitby as had been tried, with more or less success, on his predecessors. Abusive letters were sent to him, unctuous pamphlets were published ; but Mr. Whitby was a strong man, and pursued the even tenor of his way, uninfluenced by opposition or abuse. The church was growing in numbers, and expressed its loyalty to its pastor by dismissing the disturbers of the peace. It was felt that strong measures were necessary, if the church was to make any progress. From the very beginnings of the church, there had been occasional outbreaks. By thus striking at the cause of the trouble the unity and peace of the church were secured.

In dealing with this trouble Mr. Whitby showed great wisdom and discretion. Before proceeding to the extreme measure of expelling the "disturbers," the Tacket Street and Stoke Green Churches were asked to appoint three members each to adjudicate in the dispute ; and their decision justified the church in taking the strong line it pursued. From this time the records show con-

stant, quiet, steady progress ; for years there was nothing more exciting than the regular admission of new members.

Mr. Whitby continued in the pastorate to July 17th, 1853, when he resigned and removed to Swansea.

One of the most valuable results of the Rev. John Whitby's ministry was to lay a good foundation on which his illustrious successor, and brother-in-law, the Rev. John Raven, could build. Mr. Raven entered upon the pastorate here on January 15th, 1854, and during his ministry the church became one of the strongest spiritual forces in the country. In the 15½ years during which he held the pastorate 1,046 members were admitted into fellowship.

In the light alike of his character and work, his coming to Ipswich can aptly be expressed in the New Testament words, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." It is remarkable what a mighty power he wielded in his pulpit ministrations ; the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon once referred to him as "that saintly winner of souls."

He seems to have been "a living sermon of the truths he taught." To this day the name of John Raven is a household word in many a home in Ipswich. The older members of the church still recall his ministry with great joy and pride. Mr. Raven was no stranger to the district when he settled as pastor at St. Nicholas. It was at Witham where he first joined the church ; and it was at Hadleigh where he began his ministry. He had preached at the dedication of Burstal Chapel in 1843.

At the time of his call to Ipswich he was living in Birmingham. His settlement at St. Nicholas illustrates how important events hang on very slender threads.

At a meeting of the Supply Committee it was proposed that the Rev. John Raven be invited to preach for two Sundays. This was negatived by six votes to three. A month later the minister who was invited to preach was taken ill, and Mr. Raven was asked to fill the gap. He replied that he would do so if they would allow him to come as a candidate ; this the Committee declined. The church, feeling that the action of the Committee, in thus opposing Mr. Raven's candidature, was unwarrantable, passed a vote of censure on the said Committee, and proceeded to invite Mr. Raven to the pastorate. At that time he was minister in Salford, Manchester, where his son lay ill. Hoping a change would save his son's life, and believing the call came from God, he accepted and commenced his ministry in January, 1854.

As we have seen, remarkable results marked his preaching from the commencement ; large numbers were added to the church, and a new spirit breathed over the whole congregation.

In 1870 the Rev. George Snashall, his successor in the pastorate,

wrote a brief sketch of his life, from which the following extract is taken.

"Five young men entered the ministry from St. Nicholas Street Church; Messrs. Butcher, Singleton, Meeking, Collins, and Touzseau."

In June, 1855, a new chapel and vestry were built at California. The next evangelistic effort was the erection of a chapel at Belstead, which, by the liberality of earnest friends, was put in trust in connection with St. Nicholas Chapel. The Sunday school is conducted, and the cause is greatly sustained by, Mr. Harwood and members of his family. At the village of Washbrook, Mr. Raven purchased a small chapel and property which had been occupied by the Wesleyans. At St. Clement's the large room at the "White Elm" was rented for afternoons and evening services."

Soon after Mr. Raven's settlement it was found necessary to enlarge the chapel to accommodate the increasing congregation; a new schoolroom was also built. In a few years, owing to the increasing number of scholars, the schoolroom was enlarged, classrooms constructed, ministers and deacons' vestries erected.

In 1856 Mr. Raven supported an appeal for the still further enlargement of the chapel owing to the crowded congregations. The scholars had doubled in number in two years; the chapel was filled three times every Sunday. The work had so increased that in 1864 the Rev. F. Warmington, from Fordham, who afterwards married Mr. Raven's daughter, was appointed assistant minister. He remained two years, when he removed to Buntingford; the Rev. J. L. Collins succeeded him, from Cheshunt College, and remained till 1868, when he removed to Finchingfield.

In the autumn of 1866, Mr. Raven suffered a great bereavement in the sudden death of his wife. He was at Hadleigh, preaching Sunday School sermons, and was actually in the pulpit when a message came that his wife had been stricken with paralysis. He returned to Ipswich at once to see his wife unconsciously sinking into death. Further sorrow clouded his soul as five of his eight children died before he was called away himself.

In June, 1869, feeling the burden of the work to be more than he could well sustain, Mr. Raven resigned. The letter of resignation was private. It is a pathetic document, breathing a tender and affectionate spirit to the Church and Congregation, which he had so faithfully served for 15 years. He reviewed his work. He rejoiced that so many had become followers of Christ. He yearned over the unconverted; "I cannot endure the thought of meeting any of the unsaved in the judgment of the last day. Save them,

Lord," are the words of anxious solicitation that came from his heart.

In the year that he resigned the charge at St. Nicholas he became pastor of the church at Felstead, in Essex. In 1871 he preached at the school anniversary at St. Nicholas. Three years later, in failing health, he visited the United States of America, describing himself as about to go down into Egypt, like Jacob, to see his children before he died. His words proved prophetic. Returning to England, he grew gradually weaker. His faith, however, never faltered or grew dim; "I am as happy in God as I can possibly be," were among his last words. He passed quietly to rest on March 7th, 1875, at Hutton; his remains were brought to Ipswich for interment. A large number of people met the funeral party at the railway station, and escorted it to St. Nicholas Chapel, where a service was held in the presence of a great congregation of sympathisers; many of them mourned the loss of a spiritual father.

A tablet to his memory was placed in the chapel in 1880, bearing the following inscription:—

" In affectionate remembrance of the
Rev. John Raven,
who was for 48 years the Pastor successively
of Churches in Hadleigh, Birmingham,
Dudley, Salford, Ipswich, and Felstead.
He was a man of great benevolence, a
Christian of eminent piety, and a minister
of extraordinary pathos and devotion.
Born February 14th, 1806.
Died March 7th, 1875.
His body rests in Ipswich Cemetery.
Rev., Chap. xiv., verse 13."

In March, 1870, Mr. Raven was succeeded in the pastorate by the Rev. George Snashall, B.A., from Swanland. Mr. Snashall was a man of kindred spirit to his predecessor, and withal of considerable intellectual attainments. He is described as a "magnetic preacher." Judged by the number of persons added to the church his ministry must have been even more successful than that of Mr. Raven; during the five years he held the pastorate not less than 400 names were added to the church roll. His work among the young was a special feature of his ministry. In the year 1873 a remarkable revival of religion swept over the town. Mr. John Harris, an agent of the Evangelisation Society, came down here to conduct a mission; into this movement Mr. Snashall threw himself wholeheartedly. For six months, meetings were held every night, and the pastor, during that time, spoke personally to more than

500 persons about their soul's welfare. More than two hundred members were added to the church that year.

In 1873 the Congregational Union of England and Wales visited Ipswich, and Mr. Snashall added to his labours in this, the greatest year of his life, the work of Secretary to the local Committee for receiving the Union.

During this pastorate the chapel at California (now St. John's) was enlarged, a new lecture room at St. Nicholas was built, and practical help given to the friends at St. Clement's towards building their new chapel. Mr. Snashall resigned his charge here in 1875, and removed to Chesterfield, thence to Leicester, Finsbury Park, and Victoria Park, London. He died at Worthing in 1903.

The next pastor was the Rev. T. Wickham Tozer, who settled in 1876, from London. Mr. Tozer was a remarkably gifted man, and, from the point of view of public work, broad and generous sympathies, the best known of all the ministers of St. Nicholas Church. He was a very different type of man from any of his predecessors ; intensely practical, and as intensely human, with a courage that never flinched from any duty, however painful or difficult. The task upon which Mr. Tozer entered at St. Nicholas was not an easy one. The memory of the fervid evangelism of John Raven and George Snashall was still uppermost in the minds of the people, and they were not quite prepared for the practical and virile ministry of their successor. The times were changing and demanding new methods ; church doctrines and usages were beginning to feel the pressure of new forces ; old phrases were losing their significance, the old emotionalism was losing its power ; facts the people were slow to recognise. Mr. Tozer was, in some sense, a seer, a man who discerned " the signs of the times." He set himself manfully to meet the new problems that were pressing for solution, but he had a well nigh impossible task. Mr. Tozer was, in a very real sense, a pioneer, a pathfinder, albeit a generation before his time. Social reform was a heresy to the church of that time, and when this man came with his full-orbed gospel, which included the social and domestic, as well as the more strictly spiritual, interests of the people, he found himself confronted with difficulties that might well have discouraged a less courageous man. The result of this new attitude was soon manifest ; the membership of the church began to dwindle, and the ministry which began with 500 members ended with little more than 200.

Mr. Tozer's preaching was of an incisive order, at times rising to real eloquence, but never losing sight of the great central truths of the Gospel. In 1879, the Jubilee of the opening of the chapel was celebrated by large and enthusiastic gatherings. Dr. Parker, of

the City Temple, London ; the Rev. T. Wigner, of Lewisham ; and the Rev. Henry Simon, of Westminster, were the preachers.

Two incidents in Mr. Tozer's life in Ipswich stand out as witnesses to his splendid courage, and uncompromising love of righteousness and fair play. In 1883 the Salvation Army was passing through stormy seas. In various parts of the country its agents were roughly and even cruelly treated. Those were days when a species of hooliganism was rampant ; to break up a meeting of the Salvation Army, and maim those who were trying to conduct it, was an event looked forward to with great glee. Mr. Tozer admired the work the Army was doing, and condemned in strongest language, the opposition to which its leaders were subjected. At the same time he felt that the churches and ministers could best carry on such a mission in Ipswich. Accordingly a mission was promoted at the Rope Walk Primitive Methodist Chapel. Some of the leading Nonconformists of the town united with Mr. Tozer in forming a local "Army." On January 5th a procession was formed, headed by a band. As they marched through the streets thousands of people assembled to see them. It became evident that hostility was more marked than curiosity. Violence soon broke out. The processionists were personally assaulted, and stoned, and the party broken up. The chapel property, too, was severely handled. As usual the riot advertised the mission, and for months afterwards meetings were held every night, supported by the generosity of the public. In this work Mr. Tozer was the leading figure, and ever manifested a keen anxiety for the moral welfare of the people.

In 1878 another incident occurred which brought his name prominently before the public, and which had more than a local influence ; this was known as *The Akenham Scandal*.

A child, whose parents were Baptists, died, and arrangements were made for the interment of the remains in the Parish Churchyard at Akenham. Mr. Tozer readily consented to conduct the funeral service in a meadow, off the public road, near the Churchyard. While the solemn service was being held, the Incumbent of Akenham and Claydon, the Rev. George Drury, appeared on the scene, and publicly protested against the service. His words were "that child has not been baptized, it is not a Christian, and I object to its being buried as such." Mr. Tozer raised his arms, and trembling with emotion, exclaimed, "If it were not for harrowing the feelings of these poor people, I would soon silence your brutal speech." The Incumbent took umbrage at this defensive utterance, and when a report of the occurrence appeared in the *East Anglian Daily Times* sued the proprietors for libel. The trial resulted in a fine of forty shillings against the paper. The effects of this, the *Akenham Scandal Case*, were so far reaching that,

in a very short time Parliament passed an Act giving the right to Nonconformists to inter in parish churchyards, after giving due notice, and to hold their own service at the burial of their dead.

The Queen's Jubilee Celebrations in 1887 gave Mr. Tozer another opportunity of serving the public. At his suggestion the Fund raised was devoted to the formation of the Lending Department of the Free Library. He was rewarded for this effort by being made Chairman of the Free Library Committee in 1890, a post he held till his death in 1903. Under his chairmanship the Reference Department, which is invaluable to the citizens of Ipswich, was added to the Library.

Mr. Tozer's ministry at St. Nicholas closed in September, 1890, but he continued to reside in the town, and to give his time and strength to the larger ministry of social amelioration.

It is difficult to estimate the large place he filled in the life of Ipswich. Some of his most successful efforts were made entirely outside church circles. As an author, Mr. Tozer revealed considerable literary power and insight. In 1867, he published a volume of "Essays and Discourses," some of which are brilliant, and all of them well worth reading. In 1874 he issued a volume entitled "The Other Side of Things." It consists of 18 essays, and is strikingly original and humorous. He also issued an interesting little work entitled "The Pulpit's Reply to the Grumbling Pew."

As a Social Reformer, Mr. Tozer was advanced and discriminating. His knowledge of the poor, and his almost intuitive power of analyzing character, and detecting imposture, made him a reliable dispenser of charities. On more than one occasion the town publicly recognised his work as a citizen in a very practical form.

In September, 1903, after a long and painful illness, he passed to his rest. As an evidence of the esteem in which he was held by his fellow townsmen, his tombstone in the Ipswich Cemetery speaks :

" Erected by sincere friends in grateful
Memory of the
Rev. T. Wickham Tozer,
Pastor of the Congregational Church,
St. Nicholas, Ipswich, 1875-1890.
Chairman of the Board of Guardians,
the Labour Bureau, and Free Library,
Died September 9th, 1903.
Aged 76 years.

" After he had served his own generation by the will of God
he fell asleep."

The Rev. John Saunders, B.A., from Ryde, Isle of Wight, became pastor in 1891. Mr. Saunders was not unknown to Ipswich when

he came to St. Nicholas. On leaving Cheshunt College in 1871, he accepted a call to Crown Street as his first pastorate, and for four years wielded a remarkable influence in the Nonconformist ministry of Ipswich. That earlier ministry was still gratefully remembered when he accepted the call to St. Nicholas. It is interesting to note that in Ipswich he commenced and closed his long ministry.

Mr. Saunders was distinctly a scholar and a preacher. Few men in our ministry excelled him in cultured attainments.

The pulpit, however, was his throne ; so marked was his power here that he is still spoken of as the " old man eloquent." All his discourses were characterised by scholarly research and spiritual insight.

Notwithstanding his extraordinary gifts he was a man of the most unassuming retiring disposition, and one of the most loveable of men. During his ministry at St. Nicholas a new organ was installed, costing £600.

In 1905, feeling the weight of years pressing upon him, he resigned his charge. The farewell meeting, held in the chapel, was remarkable for its evidences of devotion, and its representative character. At this meeting he was presented with a cheque for £112, as a token of the respect and love felt for him by his people. He is now living in honoured retirement at Wallington, Surrey.*

In 1906 the Rev. John Gleeson became pastor. Trained at Rotherham College, he had held pastorates in Ireland, Cumberland, and Yorkshire.

Mr. Gleeson threw himself with characteristic enthusiasm into the public life of the town ; his large social sympathies and catholic spirit won the affections of large numbers of the people. " His monthly Sunday afternoons for men are a special feature in his work at St. Nicholas, attracting large numbers of men, many of whom attend no place of worship. His influence on the working classes, owing to his catholic sympathies, his practical homilies, his large views on social questions, and his simple unrestrained humour, is most marked."†

Mr. Gleeson continued his ministry here with unflagging energy until the autumn of 1915, when he met his death in a tragical manner. Returning from a Christian Endeavour meeting he took a short cut along a narrow lane leading into one of the main thoroughfares. The night was very dark, and in the darkened condition of the streets, owing to the war, he must have mistaken an open door at the back of the Constitutional Club, in Upper Brook Street, for an exit into the main street, and passing through

* Many of the facts relating to the later history of St. Nicholas are taken from a "Historical Sketch" by Rev. J. Gleeson.

† "Ipswich Observer," July 1908.

it he fell down a deep area and fractured his skull. He was taken to the East Suffolk Hospital, but never regained consciousness, and passed away early on the following morning.

The news of his death came as a terrible shock to the town and district. The esteem in which he was held by all sections of the community was evidenced by the large congregation that assembled in the church, for the funeral on Saturday afternoon, October 2nd, and the still larger crowd that gathered for the Memorial Service on the following day (hundreds being unable to gain admission). Both these services were conducted by the Rev. T. J. Hosken, County Secretary, and a close personal friend of the deceased minister.

In the summer of 1916 the Rev. Albert Bage, of Bradford, who had held previous pastorates at Halifax and Romsey, accepted the invitations of the church to fill the vacant pastorate, and still continues in that office.

CROWN STREET CHAPEL.

The church and congregation worshipping in this chapel formerly occupied a building called Salem Chapel, which stands in St. George's Lane, opposite the place where St. George's Chapel formerly stood, where Bilney was apprehended when preaching in favour of the Reformation, and where he so enraged the monks that they twice plucked him out of the pulpit. At that time he escaped, but did not cease to preach. He afterwards offended the popish clergy and people by a sermon at Christ's Church in this town; they thereupon took and imprisoned him. Here also he held a controversy with Friar Brasterd, respecting the mediation of the saints, for which he was accused as a heretic, removed to London, and executed there.

Salem Chapel was built at the sole expense of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, at a cost of £1,200; it was opened on June 11th, 1812, The Rev. John Hartnell was for several years minister of this chapel. He was an extraordinary instance of successful study in the case of a person who had not the advantages of early education. He died May 11th, 1825, aged 40 years, and on his death the members of the various denominations voluntarily raised a sum of £500 for the benefit of his orphan children.

The chapel had been closed for nearly seven years when the Rev. Thomas Middleditch, from Biggleswade, came in 1836, and shortly after formed a church here on the true union principle, the members being Baptists and Independents indiscriminately. They bought and enlarged the chapel, and put it in trust for "the

use of a Christian church." After a pastorate of eight years Mr. Middleditch resigned, and was succeeded in 1845 by the Rev. John Gay, who was born at Midsomer Norton, near Bristol. in 1816, and was educated at Hoxton, intending to devote himself to the Wesleyan ministry. In 1841 he commenced his career as a preacher, and in 1843, while stationed at Ipswich, he left the Wesleyan connexion and undertook the pastorate of Salem Chapel. His ministry was greatly blessed ; so much so that another enlargement was necessary. But this period of success was not destined to continue unbroken ; differences on questions of doctrine arose between the two sections of the church (Baptists and Congregationalists) which led to serious conflict, and litigation was only averted by referring the points at issue to the arbitration of two eminent Free Churchmen—Mr. Samuel Morley acting for the church and the Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon for the dissentients. The decision was averse to Mr. Gay and his supporters, who withdrew, and resolved to erect a new place of worship. This proved a somewhat formidable task for this small community, but the enthusiasm and devotion with which they faced it is shown in the record of the time. "When the building committee was formed the members realised that over £3,000 would be required for this undertaking. The site, upon which it was proposed to erect the new building, cost nearly £100 ; the builder's estimate exceeded £2,000. There appears to have been something akin to rivalry between pastor and people in collecting funds. The pastor fixed upon £1,000 as the sum he would aim at securing ; the church followed his example, while the remaining £1,000 might be left on mortgage for a while. The pastor was successful beyond his estimate, and when the first church meeting was held in the new building he was able to report the sum of £1,200 as raised by himself, and he entered on the minutes this fervent expression of his personal gratitude. :

"Thanks be to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ for helping me to do this thing. I hope to praise God in time and eternity."

"The memorial stone of the new church was laid by Mr. Samuel Morley on May 26th, 1865, and the opening took place, with a full measure of rejoicing, on November 23rd, in the same year. The opening sermon was preached by the Rev. Henry Allon, D.D., of Islington, London. A public luncheon was served in the school-room, presided over by the Mayor of the Borough, Ebenezer Goddard, Esq. The measure of public sympathy accorded to Mr. Gay, and the church over which he presided, was a notable feature of the period. The financial aid and personal encouragement which Mr. Morley gave to the project were, no doubt, important factors in the speedy success of the building scheme."

Mr. Gay did not long continue to minister in the new place. After a lingering and painful illness he passed to his rest December 7th, 1869. His funeral called forth one of the most remarkable exhibitions of public esteem that Ipswich had ever witnessed.

In a brief memoir of him, contributed to the "Suffolk Congregational Magazine," the Rev. John Browne, of Wrentham, says :—

"Naturally Mr. Gay was exceedingly light-hearted. He had troubles and difficulties which, in some cases, would have broken down the strongest natures and the stoutest hearts. But he was through life a man of prayer. Daily did he seek private communion with God, and the troubles of earth he carried to the closet only, and there placed them at the feet of Jesus. At one period only did we find him sad and disconsolate. This occurred some weeks before his death. For a time he seemed to be under a cloud—to walk in the dark—to feel himself alone ; but the cloud passed before the end came, and the felt presence of Christ was powerfully realised. In his dying moments he was full of heavenly thoughts and joyful expectancy, and so passed into the fuller light."

The next minister was the Rev. John Saunders, B.A., from Cheshunt College, who was ordained July 11th, 1871. For five years Mr. Saunders maintained an able and brilliant ministry, which is still gratefully remembered by those living who were privileged to attend it. In 1875 Mr. Saunders resigned on receiving a call to Wycliffe Chapel, London ; and was succeeded by the Rev. G. H. Sandwell, from Maidenhead. In 1880 Mr. Sandwell removed to Uxbridge, and was succeeded by the Rev. Hosea Hewitt, who settled in October, 1881. During Mr. Hewitt's ministry difficulties arose in the church between minister and people, which threatened for a time to wreck the cause. The congregation declined, and the outlook became gloomy and discouraging. In 1885 Mr. Hewitt resigned, and was succeeded by the Rev. John Atkinson, who laboured for two years under difficult circumstances, and resigned in March, 1887. In July, 1887, the church was wisely led to ask the Rev. A. A. Dowsett, of Halesworth, to undertake the pastorate. Owing to previous difficulty the finances of the church were at a low ebb ; but some of the friends at Tacket Street, feeling convinced that Mr. Dowsett was eminently fitted to deal with the difficult situation, guaranteed financial help for three years. The result abundantly justified the venture. From the commencement of Mr. Dowsett's ministry the church prospered, and at the end of the first year was able to dispense with the generous help which Tacket Street had promised. For 26 years Mr. Dowsett maintained a ministry of growing usefulness and power. The following note, from a paper read at the jubilee of the church, speaks for itself :

“ Of the six pastors of this church two stand out conspicuously. Others laboured earnestly and zealously, and with considerable success ; but to these two especially was vouchsafed the inspiration which comes from the realization of the results of one's labours. Both were builders. One probably shortened his life in preaching the Gospel, and by his strenuous efforts in promoting the erection project. The Rev. John Gay wrought the impress of a remarkable personality on the religious life of this town. The same spirit has dominated the 26 years of the Rev. A. A. Dowsett's ministry. During these 26 years the church buildings were greatly extended at a cost exceeding £1,600. The school was enlarged, the lecture hall and class rooms were added. The church during these years had prospered exceedingly, the membership roll increasing from 63 to 360. It may be noted that the memorial stone of the Lecture Hall bears the name of Daniel Ford Goddard, M.P., whose father had filled an important roll on the opening of the church. The laying of this memorial stone was the first public function of Sir Daniel Goddard after his election as M.P. for Ipswich.

“ The importance of work among the young has ever been a distinguishing feature of the ministry at Crown Street. Even before the church was erected a special Sunday school committee was in existence. Mr. Dowsett's ministry made a strong appeal to young people, and he gathered round him a band of devoted young men and women.”

In July, 1913, Mr. Dowsett retired from the active work of the pastorate to undertake the important post of Warden of the Home of Rest at Trimley, left by the late Miss Dains, and still continues in that office. In July, 1914, the vacant pastorate was filled by the Rev. J. Arnold Quail, M.A., B.D., from London, who is still worthily sustaining the best traditions of the church.

ST. CLEMENT'S.

This church owes its origin to the devoted labours of a number of gentlemen from other churches in the town, who had long felt the necessity for making some provision for the religious needs of this rapidly growing neighbourhood. Writing in the Suffolk Congregational Magazine for 1868, the Rev. John Browne, of Wrentham, says :

“ In 1851 there was a deficiency of 3,000 sittings to bring the number provided up to the standard of 58 per cent. Since then the town has grown more rapidly than in the previous 20 years, but the increase of places of worship has by no means kept pace. There is now room for three, if not four, good-sized chapels, and the

Free Churchmen of Ipswich ought to possess themselves of appropriate sites for them. We are glad to inform our readers that a move has been made in this direction. In the parishes of St. Clement and St. Helen, which form almost a separate district of the town, there reside more than 10,000 persons nearly all of whom are skilled artizans and labourers. Continued prosperity in the Iron Foundaries, Manure Factories, Granaries, etc., connected with the town, will greatly increase their number. For their religious instruction there is provided church and chapel accommodation for 3,000. This has been felt to be a reproach to the Church of Christ, and recently a few gentlemen, connected by residence and business with the district named, resolved to make some attempt to lessen this deficiency. After much prayerful thought and conference, four of them determined that with the approbation of their ministers, and the benediction of their brethren in church fellowship, they would give personal service to the work of establishing a Christian Church in this locality."

The names of these four devoted souls were Edward Grimwade, Oliver Prentice, John May, and Joseph F. Alexander.

The work thus auspiciously commenced soon justified the faith of these Free Church pioneers. In 1870 a new chapel was erected, and in April of that year was opened for public worship. In the Suffolk Congregational Magazine for 1870, the following account of the building and opening ceremony is given:—

"The spot chosen for the site is one around which cluster numerous dwellings of the humbler class, and it is the hope of many that a good work may be commenced and successfully carried on in this district of the town; and that many who have hitherto neglected attending a place of worship will at once avail themselves of the opportunity of joining in the public services that will be held in this comfortable place of worship. The chapel has a frontage upon the Fore and Back Hamlets, being built close up to the boundaries. The seating accommodation is for 400 persons, with a basement school for 150 children."

The day of opening was a great day for St. Clement's. By twelve o'clock the building was completely filled by a highly respectable congregation, including most of the influential Nonconformists of the town and district.

"The proceedings commenced with the Rev. John Raven, of Felstead, reading certain appropriate passages of Scripture, and giving out a hymn. The Rev. George Snashall, B.A., then offered prayer, and the Rev. Jonah Reeve, of Stowmarket, read the 120th Psalm, and the 14th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The Rev. G. H. White, of East Bergholt, gave out the next hymn, and the Rev. T. M. Morris offered prayer. The Rev. J. W. Howett



EDWARD GRIMWADE, ESQ., J.P., Ipswich.
Chairman of the Union, 1876.

having given out another hymn, the Rev. Dr. Spence, of London, preached an appropriate and excellent sermon from Isaiah, the 45th chapter and the 15th verse. At the close of the sermon, which was patiently listened to, the Rev. W. Hammond gave out the concluding hymn, and the Rev. W. B. Dennis offered prayer.

At half-past two o'clock a large number of ladies and gentlemen sat down to dinner in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, granted for the occasion by the Mayor (Edward Grimwade, Esq.), who presided. At this meeting, the treasurer, Mr. John May, presented a financial statement of the undertaking, which showed that the ground and building cost £2,291 2s. 8d. The energy and zeal with which the work was undertaken are manifest in the fact that on the opening day the deficiency was not more than £270.

In the evening Dr. Spence, in the absence of the Rev. Dr. Stoughton, from indisposition, again occupied the pulpit, and preached to a large congregation from Matthew xi., 11. Nearly 900 persons were present, and many were unable to obtain admission.

On Sunday, April 24th, the Rev. J. C. Gallaway, M.A., preached in the morning and the Rev. Wilson McCree in the afternoon and evening to overflowing congregations." (Suff. Congl. Mag., 1870).

The first pastor of this new cause was the Rev. Joseph Feaston, from Nottingham, who settled here in 1870, but was obliged to retire, after a very brief pastorate, on account of ill health. The next minister was the Rev. Jonathan Calvert, of New College, who was ordained here September 17th, 1872; the Revs. S. Newth, M.A., and R. Halley, D.D., taking the principal parts of the service. Mr. Calvert removed to Beccles in 1876, and the Rev. Thomas Tonkinson, from Long Stratton, was ordained April 12th, 1877. Mr. Tonkinson resigned his charge in June, 1880, having decided to make his home in New Zealand, where many of his relatives resided. In June, 1881, the Rev. M. D. Morgan, of New College, entered upon the vacant pastorate, and, after a very successful ministry, resigned in 1885, having accepted a call to Leicester. He was succeeded by the Rev. L. Jenkin Jones, who settled here in October, 1885. During Mr. Jones' ministry one of the founders of the cause, Mr. Edward Grimwade, passed away. He died November, 1886. Mr. Grimwade's name had been so intimately connected not only with St. Clement's, but with Congregationalism in the town and country, that an earnest desire was expressed by a great many friends to erect some lasting memorial to his name; and what more fitting memorial could be decided upon than an enlargement of the work which he, with others, had been instrumental in founding, and which lay so near his heart? Accordingly the handsome building in the Back Hamlet was erected.

This building was opened for public worship in September, 1888, and is known as "the Grimwade Memorial." The original building was then transformed into a Sunday School. In 1891 Mr. Jones resigned, and entered the Unitarian Ministry. He was succeeded by the Rev. T. A. Carritt, from Trowse, Norwich, who settled here in 1891. For nearly 15 years Mr. Carritt maintained a helpful and successful ministry, giving himself, with unstinted devotion, to the work of the church; and, as District Secretary for the County Union, to the calls of the village churches throughout South Suffolk. Much to the regret of a great number of friends Mr. Carritt resigned in September, 1907, having accepted a call from the church at Portishead, Somersetshire. The next minister was the Rev. T. Armes, from Darwen, Lancashire. During Mr. Armes' ministry a new organ, the gift of Mr. W. Pipe, was installed in the church, and other alterations effected, which added greatly to the comfort and effectiveness of the building. He resigned in December, 1912, and removed to Goole, Yorkshire. In September, 1913, the Rev. D. S. Johns, of Manchester, accepted the call of the church, and resigned in May, 1918, having accepted a call to Manchester. In 1918, the Rev. J. G. Green, who had been trained at Lancashire College, and held a brief pastorate at Banbury, entered upon the work here, and still remains pastor.

ST. JOHN'S, IPSWICH.

This cause owes its origin to the wise foresight and devotion of the Rev. John Raven and the friends working with him at Nicholas Street. Seeing the possible development of the town in that direction, the friends there were quick to seize the opportunity, and were first in the field in the attempt to make provision for the spiritual needs of a growing community. Their first effort was the erection of a small building in which Sunday services were conducted by lay helpers. This sufficed for a time, but with the increase of population the demand arose for increased accommodation, and about the year 1872, under the pastorate of the Rev. George Snashall, B.A., the building was considerably enlarged. The work grew so satisfactorily that soon a church was formed, and placed under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. A. Cooper, who held the pastorate for a short time, and was succeeded by the Rev. Algernon R. Goddard, B.A. Again the chapel became too small for rapidly increasing congregations. After some consideration it was decided to erect a new building. By profession Mr. Goddard was an architect, and he drew up plans and took the oversight of the erection of the new chapel. Owing to delicate health Mr.

Goddard was compelled to resign the pastorate much to the regret of his people. The next minister was the Rev. G. A. Mackenzie, who settled here in 1890. Mr. Mackenzie, prior to accepting this position, had been one of the private secretaries of General Booth, of the Salvation Army, and he brought his business capacity and untiring energy to the work of this church, with the result that the debt with which the building was encumbered was entirely discharged. After a few years of earnest labour, in which he was ably seconded by his gifted wife, he removed to London, and later to Canada. He was succeeded in 1897 by Mr. F. D. Humphreys, of Highbury, London. After working for some years as a lay pastor, Mr. Humphreys duly qualified himself for the ministry by taking the Congregational Union examinations, and was ordained in February, 1900. After five years of very happy and much appreciated service—three as lay pastor and two as minister—Mr. Humphreys removed to Honiton, Devonshire, much to the regret of the people to whom he had so faithfully ministered. After some months of prayer and anxious thought, the pastorate was offered to and accepted by the Rev. J. Clement Angel, from Bexley, who settled here in 1902, but resigned the following year, and removed to Beaminster, in Dorsetshire. The next minister was the Rev. T. Devine, who had held previous pastorates in the county at Debenham and Long Melford, and who settled here in 1905. This settlement was an exceedingly happy and prosperous one ; Mr. Devine winning the confidence and affection of all his people by the transparent sincerity of his life and work. During this pastorate the project of erecting a new and more commodious building for public worship, which had long been in the minds and hearts of the members of the church, was realised, and the present beautiful building in Cowper Street is the result. Owing to the generosity of Mr. William Pipe this was accomplished much sooner than would have been possible under ordinary circumstances. The foundation stone of this building was laid on May 23rd, 1906, by the Right Honourable Sir Daniel Ford Goddard, and was opened for public worship on the afternoon of Wednesday, April 24th, 1907, when the Rev. Joseph Hocking, of London, was the special preacher. A public meeting was held in the evening, presided over by Mr. Councillor W. Pipe, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. T. J. Hosken, Chairman of the Suffolk Union ; C. H. Vine, of Ilford ; S. Hirst, B.A., B.D., of Ipswich ; and Mr. Alderman J. H. Grimwade, of Ipswich. Mr. Devine continued his ministry here until 1912, when a serious breakdown in health compelled him to resign, to the great sorrow of all who knew him. He was succeeded in 1913 by the Rev. E. F. Walker, from Nottingham College, who remained until 1916, when he removed to Rush-

den, Northamptonshire. In 1917 the Rev. W. H. N. Mumford, M.A., from Hemingsford, accepted a call to the pastorate and is still the minister.

HATFIELD ROAD, IPSWICH.

In the year 1903 the Rev. M. D. Morgan, who had previously held pastorates at St. Clement's, Ipswich, and Harwich, conceived the idea of starting work in this rapidly increasing district of Ipswich. He had previously purchased a piece of land in the Hatfield Road, and on this fine site erected an iron chapel, capable of seating 250 persons. These premises were eventually purchased by the church which Mr. Morgan had gathered round him, and were put in trust with the Congregational Union of England and Wales as a Congregational Church. The work has succeeded admirably, and bids fair to become a strong suburban cause. Mr. Morgan was its first minister, and still continues in that office.

CONGREGATIONALISM IN BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

BURY in early times was favoured with an evangelical ministry. George Withers, D.D., was silenced here in 1565 by Archbishop Parker, for objecting to the "habits," but at his people's earnest request he submitted, and was restored to his office. Richard Gawton, or Gayton, had been suspended by Bishop Freeke, at Norwich, in 1576, on account of the ceremonies and the cross; he became a preacher here in 1581. He and John Handson, of whom we have spoken before,* were ministers of St. James' when Robert Browne came to the town in 1582, and John Hill was a persecuted Puritan minister here at the same time. Elias Thacker and John Copping, as we have seen,† embraced Browne's opinions, and circulated his books; they were convicted of this crime in July, 1583, and were executed during the assizes.

In 1603, a volume was printed containing "certaine Godly and learned expositions upon divers parts of Scripture, by Maister George Estey, late preacher of the Word of God in Saint Edmund's Burie"; after this author we find the names of Gibbons, White, Calamy, Jewell, Burroughes, Sainthill, and Wall; and in the Commonwealth period we find Claget and Sclater in the parish churches; we are not surprised, therefore, to find that Independency took root in this town at an early period.

Edwards, in his *Gangræna*, published in 1646, says: "Katherine Childley, about August last, came to Stepney, where she hath drawn away some persons to Brownism, and was with Mr. Greenhill"; most probably a member of his church. *Gangræna* Edwards, or as Milton styled him, Shallow Edwards, had written a book against Independency, and Katherine Childley had replied to him, and her pamphlet was as fine a piece of controversial criticism as that age produced. Stung to the quick because worsted in the encounter by a woman, Shallow Edwards did not know how to retaliate but with abuse, and in the third part of his *Gangræna* he says:—

"There is one, Katherine Childley, an old Brownist, and her son, a young Brownist, a pragmaticall fellow, who not content with spreading the poison in and about London, go down into

* See page 17.

† See page 18.

the country and gather people to them, and among other places they have been this summer to Bury, in Suffolk, to set up and gather a church there, where, as I have got it from good hands, they have gathered about seven persons, and kept their conventicles together." "Gaffer Lansetter, of Bury (for so he was until he became 'Master' by preaching), whom I have spoken of in the 2nd part of Gangræna, was a great man with Katherine Childley and her sonne, and is left preacher to that company of sectaries in their room ; and I have great reason to think, by the epistle to the reader, that Katherine Childley and her sonne made the book called 'Lansetter's Launce,' because Katherine Childley and her son's books (for the mother and son made them together, one inditing and the other writing) are highly magnified, and the brazen-faced, audacious old woman resembled Jael."

This elegant extract will give an idea of the manner in which the early Independents were regarded and treated by Presbyterians, who feared that their supremacy would be endangered by the purer and more tolerant principles of Independency.

Edwards is, however, so far truthful in regard to the facts recorded, as that a small gathered church was formed in this town on the 16th of August, 1646, and Katherine Childley and her son were present, and subscribed their names to the record as witnesses to the transaction. That record is still extant. The members of this church were few and poor, and some of them were illiterate, and we are more than inclined to believe that their manifesto, written on the occasion, was from the pen of the redoubtable Katherine herself, unless John Lansetter, who was one of the signatories, had again couched his "Launce" for the occasion.

"Be it known unto all the saints in Sion that we whose names are under written, knowing that there is but one Eternal God—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit ; . . . and that the eternal Son gave commission to his disciples that they should teach his followers to do and observe all things which he commanded, and that he sent his holy Spirit to assist them, and strengthen them, and to confirm their holy actions, amongst which to erect particular churches of saints here on earth was one ; and being convinced in conscience of the evil of the Church of England, and of all other states which are contrary to Christ's institutions ; and being fully separated not only from them, but also from those who communicate with them publicly or privately : we resolve, by the grace of God, not to return unto their vain inventions, their human devices, their abominable idolatries, or superstitious high places, which were built and dedicated to idolatry. And seeing not only the necessity of this separation, but also the great need of continuing in Christian fellowship

and society, . . . we do therefore, together with our posterity, covenant to become a peculiar temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, an entire spouse of Jesus Christ, our Lord of Glory, for the enjoyment of all his holy ordinances, according to his own institutions, and so to walk in all his ways, so far as he hath revealed unto us, or shall reveal hereafter."

This strict Brownist covenant was signed by eight adults ; but it is specially noted that three of them "brought in their children with them," and the names of these children, six in all, are also appended to the document. They evidently believed in the membership of children, recognized them as the children of the church, and so endeavoured to realize an idea, which some churches seem almost to have forgotten, that the children of the church are related to the church itself.

But this first settlement was not a permanent one. Nothing further appears to have been done in connexion with it, and the design collapsed. Two years afterwards, on the 21st of December, 1648, ten persons "sat down" in a more orderly way, and entered into a covenant of a more liberal character, and more in harmony with the spirit of the times.

"We whose names are here subscribed do resolve and engage, by the help of the Spirit of God, to walk in all the ways of God, so far forth as He hath revealed, or shall reveal unto us by His word ; and in all duties of love and watchfulness each to other as becomes a church of Christ."

Messengers from the Church at Norwich were present, who gave a report at Norwich of "the order of the Christians gathering a church there," (at Bury) ; "which being satisfactory the church declared to hold communion with them."* Before the close of the year, several other persons joined themselves to this little company, and a foundation was laid which has remained firm to the present day. Three only of the persons who joined in the first covenant united in this ; but, alas ! they proved themselves unworthy of the position they had taken, and not very long after, they were separated from the society.

In the Milton State Papers, June, 15th, 1654—

"It is certified that the Congregational Church at Bury have walked together in the fellowship of the Gospel for the space of divers years without any assistance from the State, being constrained, for the number of their audience, to hire the Shire house at a great rent, and to maintain a minister at a private charge,

* Norwich Church Book.

having not above six persons in their society who may conveniently spare help from the maintenance of their families towards the charges aforesaid.

Signed, John Hayward, James Grundy, and George Stannard."

Mr. Taylor was now at Bury, and it is probable that his coming among the people was the cause of this increased attendance, and that he is the minister they were called to maintain. The certificate contains nothing to lead us to suppose that the church had a settled minister before Mr. Taylor. We may regard him therefore as their first pastor.

"Thomas Taylor, sometime a member of the Church of Christ which is at Norwich, and afterwards, by dismission from them, a foundation member of the church which is at Godwick and Stanfield, in the County of Norfolk, being a public preacher and dispenser of the gospel, approved therein by both those churches, was called by this church to preach and dispense the gospel of Christ to them in the year 1653; and after near two years' experience and trial, his dismission being first obtained from the church at Godwick and Stanfield, was by commendation from the said church and brethren at Godwick, and also by giving in a relation of the dealings of God with his soul, and of the work of grace upon his heart, received into fellowship as a brother upon the 18th of the ninth month (November), 1655."

From the "Nonconformist Memorials" we learn that Mr. Taylor was born at Scarning, in Norfolk, in November, 1625. He received the rudiments of his education at Wymondham, and went afterwards to Gonvil and Gaius College, Cambridge. Cambridge was then puritanically inclined, and Mr. Taylor's father, being a Cavalier, took him from Cambridge, and placed him in the family of Mr. Ripps, of Mattishall, as tutor to his children. There he became acquainted with some religious people who exerted a great influence upon his mind. He united himself with the Congregational Church at Norwich, and was dismissed by them to unite with other brethren in the formation of the church at Godwick. The date of his removal to Bury was probably 1653.

When he came he found the church in a very unsatisfactory state, and set himself to effect a reformation before he accepted the pastorate. On the 29th of March, 1655, a day of fasting and prayer was held, at which "they confessed and bewailed their manifold sins and transgressions, especially their breach of covenant, and neglect of duty each to other, which the Lord convinced them was the occasion of so many breaches and breaking forth of sin among them," evils the existence of which the records of the church abundantly prove. They therefore specially resolved upon the

following amendments, which will suggest the points on which they felt they had been remiss and guilty.

1. "To be more regular and diligent in attendance at the assemblies of the saints and meetings of the church.

2. "More faithfully and lovingly to walk toward, and watch over, each other according to all the parts of our duty.

3. "To endeavour to bear and take, patiently, meekly, and in the spirit of love, such words of admonition and exhortation as the church, or any brother or sister, shall from the Lord administer unto us, not gathering up prejudice or evil will against such as shall be faithful and deal most plainly with us.

4. "To labour to bear the frailties and infirmities of each other, and to cover the same with the skirt of love.

5. "To sanctify the name of God in all His ordinances as far as we are through grace agreed, and in those ordinances wherein our judgments differ to walk peaceably and orderly towards each other, in the spirit of meekness and forbearance, that the name of God may in all things by us be sanctified, and not through our divisions and disorderly walkings be blasphemed."

They note that—

"The ordinances in which they are agreed are—i., prayer ; ii., preaching of the word or prophesying ; iii., keeping the first day of the week holy unto the Lord ; iv., baptism for believers ; v., breaking of bread. The ordinances wherein at present some do dissent are—i., baptism for the seed of believers ; and ii., singing of psalms."

The foregoing resolutions and statements, unquestionably prepared by Mr. Taylor, will show what his view of the internal state of the church was at that time, and will fully inform us what improvements he felt to be necessary therein.

As the church had hitherto been without a pastor, it is not surprising that irregularities had crept in among them. Mr. Taylor came and his first business was "to set in order things that were wanting." We find him next, preparing a confession of faith under eleven principle heads, and twenty-nine subordinate divisions. This confession is a masterly performance, well worthy of the thoughtful consideration of professors of religion, even in these days ; it is comprehensive, judicious, and scriptural. Of course, it is coloured by the theological tints which prevailed when it was composed, but it has fewer questionable statements than almost any confession of faith, of the same minuteness, which that age produced. This confession was signed by all the brethren and sisters, but not as a mere matter of form. Those who dissented from any articles or statement in it, carefully noted their dissent at the time of subscription.

The 3rd day of January, 1655-6, was an important day in the history of this church, and the members had prepared for it by sending to the greater number of the churches of the same order then existing in the district, inviting the presence of their messengers on the occasion of the ordination of Mr. Taylor.

The church at Yarmouth could not send messengers, as they had received but short notice of the meeting ; they however appointed their officers to write a letter "to certify the church at Bury of our blessing the Lord that had brought up their hearts and given them an opportunity to His service," and in other ways they shewed their sympathy. The church at Norwich being invited, replied "that they could add nothing to their furtherance in this business, it being an affair the management whereof properly belonged to themselves ; and considering the unanimous concurrence of the brethren at Bury therein, they thought it not necessary to appoint messengers, but desired two brethren to send a letter to signify the sense of the church therein."

But messengers were present from the churches of Coggeshall, in Essex ; Sudbury ; two churches in Ipswich, Peter's and Hellen's ; Syleham ; Wattisfield ; Rattlesden ; Pulham ; and Hapton. And

"The church did by election, holding up of hands, and by fasting and prayer, ordain Thomas Taylor, a public preacher and member of the church, after near two years' trial and experience, unto the office of a Pastor ; and John Hayward a member of the same church unto the office of a deacon ; at a very solemn and public meeting in which the church did also make public profession of their faith according to the form already mentioned."

They tell us that they "had the unanimous approbation of the messengers, both as to their confession of faith, church state, and order—not one dissenting."

"At the same meeting they received the right hand of fellowship from the churches at Rattlesden, Wattisfield, and Coggeshall. The messengers from Hapton and Pulham declared that the church had already received the right hand of fellowship from them at or soon after their first sitting down together. The messengers from Syleham, Sudbury, and Hellen's, in Ipswich, promised to make report of our faith and order unto the churches to which they did belong, and to give us the right hand of fellowship at some convenient time ; but could not do it then because they had received no such power from the church."

From the above we learn how careful Independent Churches of that period were not to recognise other churches which in their opinion were defective in essential matters of faith and practice.

Substantial harmony of creed was one of the principal con-

ditions of fellowship, and the "right hand" was not given till it was found that this harmony existed.

This matter of giving the right hand of fellowship, after witnessing and approving the faith and order of a church, was recognised as one of supreme importance ; it was the only bond of union between Independent Churches in those days ; and it was the equivalent for recognition and reception into the association of the present day.

From several allusions in letters still extant, it is evident that the condition of the church at Bury, in its infant state, was one of extreme poverty. An appeal was made to sister churches to come to its help. From the church at Hellen's, Ipswich, a letter was sent, signed by Robert Gouge, and Robert Dunkon, containing three pounds ; and from the church at Yarmouth the sum of nine pounds four shillings was sent. Other churches probably also contributed.

The church had also to contend against some of the early excesses of the Quakers, as they were called. We insert the following extract, only because of the light it throws upon the state of religious society in those days, and because of the statement it contains of opinions then promulgated.

"November 13th, 1656. John Roote, a member of this church, was admonished by the same, and reprov'd for neglecting the assemblies of the church, and assembling with the Quakers ; and for his owning of their wicked opinions, whereof he made himself guilty of affirming that if there were any true light it was found among them ; and particularly for justifying and owning the doctrine of perfection, and a sinless state attainable, and attained by some, in this life ; and for denying the hope of the resurrection and the coming of the Lord Jesus ; viz., the hope of perfection at that day ; and also for not giving thanks at meat, but sitting down to eat bread and not call upon the name of the Lord, which crime was preferred to be proved against him, but he confessing, and also justifying the same, the church did not call for any further proof thereof.

"January 1st, 1656-7. John Roote was admonished the second time by the church for the causes above mentioned, and warn'd of the danger of sinning wilfully after he had received the knowledge of the truth.

"January 29th. John Roote was delivered over unto Satan for the causes above mentioned, and for despising the admonitions of the church" ; i.e., he was excluded from the church and sent' back into the world which is under the dominion of the prince of the power of the air."

The church had also to contend against oppression, as is evident from a petition to the Protector, November 4th, 1658. In this petition complaints were made that whilst the Presbyterians enjoyed the use of the Parish Churches for their worship, the Independents were compelled to meet in the Shire House, which was cold and cheerless, and inimical to health. Attempts were evidently made to deprive them even of this meeting place. The appeal was for the use of the chancel of St. Mary's Church ; the petitioners declaring "that there is room enough for two congregations to meet in, being parted, without any disturbance to each other, the chancel being a mere superfluity and useless to the parish as it is now."

Nicholas Claget, M.A., was at that time minister of "Mary's," and Samuel Slater, M.A., was minister of "James Meeting House," i.e., the parish churches of St. Mary and St. James ; and we can very well suppose that things were pretty nearly as they are represented by the petitioners for in a volume of sermons published in 1659 by Mr. Claget, Henry Wilkinson, of Magdalen Hall, Oxford, wrote an address to the reader, in which he expresses his high esteem for Mr. Claget, and his opinion that his hearers are greatly blessed in having such a teacher ; and then he reflects upon those who had separated themselves, and says :

"As for such who forsake faithful teachers, and the publicke assemblies, I heartily wish them timely and serious repentance, and that their palates might have a right taste, then they will conclude that the old wine is better than their new ; and that godly ordained ministers are better than upstart, uncalled, self-conceited seducers."

We can readily believe that those who could use these words would have no scruple in harassing and oppressing any Congregational brethren whom it was in their power so to treat ; and in so doing they would think they were doing God service !

No other facts of any importance have been recorded in connexion with Mr. Taylor's ministry here. The last entry in his time is of a private baptism at Wortham on the 26th of July, 1661. Several brethren of the church, together with the pastor, were appointed by the whole to meet at Wortham to receive the children of certain Christian parents into this (Bury) church.

Whether Mr. Taylor ever had the opportunity of preaching in one of the Bury churches is not known ; if he had it must have been for a very short time, and in that case he would be ejected at the Restoration ; if not, he was silenced by the operation of one or other of the persecuting acts of the restoration period, and Calamy tells us he was above a year in prison in Bury.

The church in these unhappy times was harassed and distressed ; and it appears that it also suffered from internal dissention. Mr. Taylor was obliged to remove to London, where, the church book tells us, he "betook himself to selling tobacco"; at any rate he wanted a living, and entered into business.

"During the breach and division of this church, and in the absence of their pastor, the major part attended the preaching of Mr. Lawson, who removed hither from Denton."

When the Indulgence was issued in 1672, there were three ejected ministers of the Congregational order licensed to preach in Bury : Thomas Lawson, who, after his removal from Denton, resided at Norton, and whilst living there preached in Bury in " Dame Cook's house, in Southgate Street "; the services there were conducted by him, and by the Rev. William Folkes, a Presbyterian minister ejected from Sudbury, and by the Rev. John Winbon, a Congregationalist. At the same time the Rev. Robert Asty, ejected from Stratford, was licensed as a Congregational teacher in the house of Susan Adams in Haller Street. Mr. Taylor was during this time the pastor of the Congregational Church, though living in London, but in 1674, about the middle of April, his connexion with this church ceased, and he "had his dismission sent him." Whilst engaged in trade in London he preached occasionally, sometimes in the city, and sometimes at Croydon. When the dissenters had liberty settled by law, or a little before, he succeeded Mr. Holcroft at a meeting house at Green Street, Cambridge, where he preached till November, 1700, when he died at the age of 75. He was buried in the meeting-house there, and Mr. Hursey succeeded him.

Mr. Thomas Milway had been among the people "for some time preaching the gospel" before Mr. Taylor's dismission was sent him. On the 23rd April, 1674, Mr. Milway was dismissed to the church at Bury from Coggeshall, in Essex, by a letter subscribed by Isaac Hubbard. On the 7th of May "he was chosen to the office and work of a pastor among them, Mr. Saml. Petto, Mr. Frank Holcroft, and Mr. Oddey, officers of the churches, being present and helping to carry on the work of that day, which was kept as a day of fasting and prayer."

These were dark and trying times for the little Congregational societies that had hardly been established when King Charles returned ; and many times the pastor of this church records with thankfulness the admission of members, notwithstanding the persecutions they had to endure, and on such occasions he frequently refers to Dan. ix., 25, "The streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." The clouds still threatened, and the heart of the simple pastor foreboded evil, and on the 21st of May, 1686, when recording the death of Sister Pike, at London,

he says she was "taken away in the midst of her days from the evil that is coming upon the land."

In the year 1687, an entry occurs which illustrates the ancient practice of the churches in relation to lay preaching.

"December 9th. Being Lord's Day, the church agreed that, having heard brother Robert Garrold exercise his gifts, he should be allowed to help those brethren (and others) about Combe for the present necessity; and no member of the church should take upon him to teach or preach usually without the approbation and consent of the church."

A case happened a few years earlier when a member "was censured for disorderly conduct in going up and down preaching to others without the allowance and approbation of the church, who judged him unfit for such work by reason of his unbecoming conversation."

The object of this arrangement was not to check lay preaching, for Independents had ever been advocates of the practice in opposition to the Presbyterians, but to regulate it, and to ascertain whether the Scriptural knowledge and Christian life of the preachers would qualify them for the work.

By the Yarmouth Church Book it appears that, in 1690, Mr. Milway was thought to be removable. He was invited to Yarmouth, but did not accept the call.

In the year 1692 the connexion between Mr. Milway and this church came suddenly and strangely to a close. The circumstances connected with this event were of a peculiar character, and as the record of the facts is full, and as the whole story shews what opinions were formerly held respecting the relation of pastor and people, a condensed statement is here given.

1692. "Mr. Milway had been pastor of this church eighteen years, yet in several of the last of them he had been uneasy, and sometimes desired the church to dismiss him; but the church always declared against it. Nevertheless, about November 20th, 1692, he wholly deserted the church and went to London." The ministers there wrote to the church at Bury, "to give Mr. Milway a loving dismission," instead of which they felt "necessitated to send him an admonition to return to the church, which admonition was founded upon his casting off the care of the church, and breach of covenant (Act xx., 28); and such a practice was contrary to the judgment of several holy men that were of the Congregational persuasion, such as Dr. Ames, Mr. Cotton, Dr. Owen, and also the Savoy Confession."

"But admonition, not being effectual, another church meeting was appointed upon the 31st of March, 1693, where, after seeking the Lord, there was much debate, some of the brethren being

willing to dismiss him, others contrary minded, whose reasons were as followeth, and had most weight in them :—

“ 1. That his removal could not be warranted by the Word of God, and so, consequently, his dismission would be unwarrantable also.

“ 2. That it would be a bad precedent to sister churches if, upon a pastor's withdrawing himself from the watch and ward of the church, a dismission should be presently granted. . . .

“ These reasons prevailing, the desired dismission was laid aside, and it was generally consented to that a loving letter should be written in the name of the church. . . . There were also several letters written to him by particular members of the church entreating him, in the bowels of mercy, to return and so prevent the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ and the Gospel, and the reproaches of seeming friends.”

“ But he still persisting in his obstinacy, the church proceeded to give him a second admonition, which was founded upon his still persisting in the breach of covenant, and despising the authority of the church in the former admonition (1 Tim., v., 20, Rev. ii., 3). Also on the judgment of the Synod at Cambridge, in New England, in the year 1653, in their platform of church discipline, chap. x., section 56.”

“ And that admonition was also ineffectual.”

“ October 6th, 1693. There was another church meeting, where there was much debate whether to dismiss or censure the pastor. The form of dismission drawn up by Mr. Petto, pastor of the church at Sudbury, was as follows : ‘ Whereas, Mr. Thomas Milway, sometime pastor of the church of Christ at Bury, for some reasons desires a dismission from them, this may certify all whom it may concern that his being received into that church whereof Mr. Mather is pastor, or any other congregational church in London shall be a sufficient discharge from his office and membership there.’ ”

Thirteen brethren subscribed to it, but “ there were twenty-two who declared against it as irregular and sinful. So they . . . desired that the elder would declare non-communion with Mr. Milway which the thirteen brethren were averse to. . . . The church answered that if he would come and give the church satisfaction for his offences ” (by acknowledging the evil of his course) “ they would join with them in dismissing him, and further offered to give fourteen days’ time to consider it.” This was declined.

“ Then our elder, being again desired to declare non-communion with Mr. Milway, stood up, and said ‘ Brethren, seeing I am appointed to be a mouth to the church, I do declare, in

the name of Christ and this church, that whereas Mr. Milway, our late pastor, hath cast off his care of the church, and thereby broken covenant, not taking care to fulfil his ministry; and being twice admonished to return, hath refused to hear the church, I do declare non-communication with him, and so set seal to his own act.' The twenty-two members stood up to signify their consent."

Thus terminated Mr. Milway's pastorate. Shortly after this event, and before another pastor was chosen, the church elected a deacon to assist their old elder, and on April 13th, 1694, three brethren were set apart to the office of Ruling Elders in the church. The day was observed as one of fasting and prayer, so solemn and important was the office of deacon regarded by our religious forefathers.

In the year 1696, about twenty-two members of this church, who lived in and about Combs, asked and obtained permission to become a distinct church by themselves.* And in 1699 the church proceeded to the election of a pastor.

"Mr. John Beart, having preached the gospel about five years in Bury, and having his abode in the town nigh three of those years, in which time his doctrine and conversation were satisfactory to the church, was received into this church on the 26th of November, 1699, by a letter of recommendation from Ipswich as followeth :

"Whereas our dear brother, Mr. John Beart, hath signified to us that the Church of Christ at Bury hath requested him to desire his dismissal from this church of Christ in Ipswich, so that he might join himself to them in order to their calling him to the pastoral office among them. . . .

"Now therefore we, though very loth to part with our said brother, yet willing that the service of our Lord Jesus, to which he may be called, should be promoted, do in the name and with the consent of this church, for the ends before mentioned, dismiss our said dear brother from that relation wherein he hath for some years stood unto us as a fellow member, that he may join himself to that Church of Christ at Bury. And we do also recommend our said brother unto them in the Lord as one whose spirit and walking with us hath been in all respects such as becometh the gospel of Christ, to the glory of God and our great comfort.

Signed the 16th day of November, 1699.

John Langston, Pastor.	
Thomas Wyncall	} Deacons.
Joseph Wyatt	

* See Stowmarket.

After the reception of Mr. Beart to the fellowship of the church, he was requested several times to accept the pastorate, but, for some unknown reason, declined doing so ; at length, on May 1st, 1701, he stated that, after seriously considering their call, he had resolved to accept it, provided that the choice was approved of by the neighbouring churches ; and, as he had at that time some doubts about baptizing infants, he desired that neighbouring pastors might perform this rite instead of himself.

“ On the 12th of June, 1701, John Beart, having accepted the call to office, was ordained thereunto by the public election of the church, signified by the lifting up of hands, and his renewed acceptance of the office ; whereupon the church declared their submission to him in the Lord as their pastor, and by solemn prayer with fasting did separate him for the work whereunto the Lord had called him. There were present Mr. Petto, of Sudbury, who preached a very weighty sermon from Ephes. iv., 13 ; Mr. Langston, of Ipswich, who preached from John xxi., 15-17 ; Mr. Stackhouse, of Norwich ; Mr. Doughty, of Soham, who also prayed. These four were pastors, and in addition to them there were thirteen messengers from churches there.”

Mr. Beart continued in the pastorate till the closing days of 1716, when he suddenly passed away. On the 3rd of January, 1717, the church sorrowfully records his death.

“ Mr. John Beart, a minister and pastor of this church of the gospel of the Lord Jesus with all faithfulness and readiness ; preaching the word in season and out of season as the Lord gave him opportunity ; declaring salvation alone by grace through the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law ; dividing the word of God aright, giving to every one their proper portion ; having in his lifetime printed two excellent books of great use for the good of those who read them* ; and having preached a sermon on the Lord's day on Rom. iii., 24, to the great comfort of those that heard him ; departed this life on the Thursday after, in the midst of his days, being 43 years of age ; leaving a wife and five children.”

On the 25th January, 1717, the church had a solemn meeting of prayer to seek the Lord for counsel and direction how to manage the affairs of the church so as it may be for his glory ; and then and there, as many as were able and willing, contributed towards the charge of our pastor's funeral, with great cheerfulness, to the sum of fourteen or fifteen pounds.

* The titles of his books were “ A Vindication of the Eternal Law and Gospel,” and “ Divine Breathings or Spiritual Meditations, etc.” Both were reprinted in 1753.

Mr. John Saunders came to Bury, August 22nd, 1717, and he says "the London ministers did further my coming." The London ministers appear to have had some considerable influence in this church, possibly because Mr. Abraham Crutchley left some property "for the use of the church (1716) provided there be a minister in it approved by London ministers of the Congregational persuasion, and if not to be distributed by them as they see fit."

On the 24th of October this year died Mr. James Noble, one of the Ruling Elders of the church; it is recorded of him that he "had suffered imprisonment in the time of persecution for the cause of Christ."

Before they chose a pastor the church proceeded, on the 15th of November, to fill up all the other offices. Three new ruling elders and an additional deacon were appointed at this meeting.

On the 6th of December, Mr. Saunders was desired to send to his father, the Rev. Julius Saunders, of Bedworth, for a dismission, which he did, and received this answer; that "his father was willing to see the church at Bury first and take notice of their faith and order with which answer he acquainted the church." The prudent old gentleman came on the first of May following, and stayed two sabbaths.

Meanwhile on the 6th of May, 1718, died Mr. Robert Haward, aged 60½ years.

"He was a deacon of the church, and performed the office well, having good parts and being very active in the cause of Christ. He had suffered trouble and imprisonment in times of persecution."

On his return Mr. Saunders, sen., in the name of the church at Bedworth, sent the dismission of his son to the church at Bury.

"Testifying that he hath walked very regularly and holily among us, and is, we believe, a faithful servant of Christ; one that hath no small place in our hearts and affection, and no low one in our value and esteem; we therefore beseech you as a sister church to carry it to him all love and tenderness, and with dutiful respect as to a pastor when solemnly and regularly set over you, . . . and so help together to carry on the work of our great Lord, that the heart of our dear brother be not grieved, whom we love as our own souls."

This dismission was signed July 28th, 1718, and on the 10th of August, Mr. Saunders, junr., "acquainted the church with his dismission, and mentioned some things which he had met withal in his experience, and was received in among them as a member"; and on September 11th he "was settled in the pastoral office in this church, being called thereto by the church *nemine contradicente*," but the particulars of the service are not given.

Mr. Saunders continued in the pastorate till April, 1728, when "the church dismissed him from his pastoral care over them, and from his relation to them as a Church of Christ, to the Congregational Church at Hertford, who had given him a call to the ministerial work amongst them."

No reason is given for his departure, the officers simply say it was for weighty reasons not necessary to be enlarged upon here."

The next pastor was the Rev. Thomas Savill, who was educated under Dr. Ridgley. He came to Bury at the end of November, 1728, and was ordained in the middle of July in the following year. He made very few entries in the church book. We have therefore to leap over the forty years and more of his pastorate. All that the church book tells us about it is that the Rev. Davidson had been called as an assistant in the time of Mr. Savill's weakness and infirmity, and continued for some time to preach to them after the pastor's decease. Mr. Savill died November 23rd, 1769.

In the Congregational Magazine, for 1832, the following note occurs :

"Bury, November 23rd, 1769. Last night, between twelve and one, Mr. Savill left our sinful and miserable world. He pitched on good Mr. Toms to preach his funeral sermon. You have no doubt been informed of his eldest daughter's death upwards of a fortnight ago."

Mr. Davidson declined the call of the church to the pastorate, whereupon application was made to Dr. Conder, of Homerton, who advised them to apply to the Rev. Thomas Waldegrave, the pastor of a church at Tockholes, in Lancashire, who came over in July, 1770. After preaching to them for a short time, the church unanimously invited him to come and settle amongst them ; he accepted the invitation, and came January 27th, 1771. After some months the church renewed their call, and intreated his acceptance of the pastoral care over them, to which he agreed, and the 11th of July was fixed upon for his public settlement. Meanwhile his dismission and that of his wife from the church at Tockholes was received, and they were admitted members of the church here. The deacons of his late charge say :—

"Where as the said Thomas Waldegrave hath with much acceptance and usefulness ministered to us in holy things, and is now called to the exercise of his ministerial gifts among the people of God at Bury, he needeth not epistles of commendation to them, nor letters of commendation from us ; but our hearts desire and prayer to God is for him and for those to whom he ministers, that he may be an happy and honoured instrument of much good to precious souls, as we trust he has been amongst us. Grieved as we are at the separation made between us to him, in consequence

whereof we are now as sheep without a shepherd, we do notwithstanding with grateful remembrance bless God for having lent us the ministry of his servant for a season, and desire with humble acquiescence to resign to his providence which hath removed him from us. We follow him with our prayers to God for him, and beg his prayers and those of our Christian friends, particularly of those who now enjoy the ministry, the loss of which we lament, that our breach may be healed, and that we may, in the Lord's due time, be provided with another pastor who shall come to us in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ."

At Mr. Waldegrave's settlement ten ministers were present, from different parts of the country, and took part in the service.

A brief notice of Mr. Waldegrave's life and ministry may be of interest to the reader. He was a native of Norwich, where he was born in 1732. He was the only surviving child of Henry and Letitia Waldegrave, a branch of the Right Honourable family of that name. His father was possessed of extensive property, and gave his son an education becoming his situation and property; but taking part in the rebellion of 1745, that property was confiscated, and he was obliged to quit the kingdom.

His son was taken and brought up by a maternal uncle, in the Catholic religion, until he arrived at the age of eighteen or twenty, about which time he went with some fashionable acquaintance rather to make sport of, than to hear, the Rev. Dr. Wood, of the Old Meeting, Norwich. His attention was forcibly arrested, and he began to attend regularly on the ministry there. His uncle supposed him mad, and treated him accordingly, and eventually turned him out of his house destitute. Dr. Wood and his friends rendered him assistance, and sent him for instruction first to Mr. Webb, of Hitchen, and next to Heckmondwike. Towards the close of his academical studies, he became intimately acquainted with the Rev. George Whitfield, and accompanied him in many of his preaching expeditions. He married Sarah, daughter of S. Scatchard, Esq., of Morley, near Leeds, by whom he had three children.

His first pastorate was at Tockholes, in Lancashire, which he left only because of pressing pecuniary necessity. He was invited to Hull, but came to Bury in 1770, accepted the invitation of the people there, and was recognised as pastor July 11th, 1771. He continued in this relation for thirty-two years. Towards the close of his life his mental faculties greatly failed; he died December 27th, 1812, deservedly revered for his amiable, generous, and benevolent disposition, and generally beloved by the members of his church. He was one of the ministers who preached for some weeks at the Tabernacle in London, for several successive years.

To the end of the eighteenth century the attendants at Church-

gate Street Chapel, who were Presbyterian, were in doctrinal sympathy with the Independents, though the church book contains allusions to differences on the questions of church government, and the admission of members. That doctrinal agreement is witnessed by the constant interchange of services between the respective ministers, and the presence and assistance of pastors of each denomination at the settlement of ministers in the other.

The last record of such interchange at Bury is given in the Wattisfield church book in 1792, where the pastor, the Rev. John Driver says :

“ I attended the settlement of the Rev. Ivan Johns, at Bury, with the people late under the pastoral care of the Rev. William Lincoln. Mr. Johns had been ordained previous to his coming to Bury ; he is a native of Wales, about 29 years of age. May the Lord greatly bless him among that people, and may they, though few in number, be much increased ! ”

Mr. Johns continued his ministry here till 1800, when he resigned and removed to Berlin, Connecticut ; and from this time it appears that a considerable difference of sentiment became manifest. The Whiting Street Church Book records that

“ Upon Mr. Johns leaving Bury, several persons, both men and women, had their relation (at Churchgate Street) dissolved, and were, in Christian affection, and at their own request, admitted to communion and fellowship with us, on the recommendation of their late pastor.”

On the 28th of May, 1801, the Rev. Charles Dewhirst, late student at Hoxton Academy, was ordained co-pastor with Mr. Waldegrave. He had received his dismissal from the Church of Christ at Osset, in Yorkshire, then under the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Taylor. At the ordination service Mr. Laxon, of Stowmarket, began with prayer and reading the Scriptures ; Mr. Stevenson, of Castle Hedingham, delivered a discourse on the nature of a gospel church and the right of the people to choose their own minister, and asked the usual questions ; after a concise and judicious declaration of faith from Mr. Dewhirst, the Rev. Mr. Crathern, of Dedham, offered the ordination prayer with laying on of hands. The Rev. Mr. Cockin, of Halifax, delivered the charge from Eccles. xii., 9, 10 ; the Rev. Mr. Price, of Woodbridge, prayed ; the Rev. J. M. Ray, of Sudbury, delivered a suitable discourse to the people from 2 Cor. viii., 24 ; the Rev. C. Atkinson, of Ipswich, concluded with prayer. In the evening Mr. Gunn, of Hadleigh, and Mr. Gardiner, of Cambridge, prayed, and Mr. Thornton, of Billericay, preached from Eph. iv., 3.

Mr. Dewhirst's ministry was greatly blessed, and it soon became necessary to increase the accommodation. This was done at two

different times, at an expense of £1,128 2s. 4d., and on the 2nd of September, 1802, the chapel was re-opened. The Rev. R. Simpson, of London, preached in the morning ; the Rev. R. Hall, of Cambridge, in the evening ; Mr. William Hickman, of Wattisfield ; Mr. Thomas Hickman, of Lavenham ; and Mr. M. Wilks, of London, engaged in prayer.

For some time the cause prospered, but unhappy circumstances led to a division ; temporary accommodation was found for the seceders on Angel Hill, in 1826, and a new chapel was built for them in 1828. Mr. Dewhirst resigned in consequence of declining health, and was succeeded in 1844 by Dr. Jackson, from Sudbury, who relinquished the pastorate in 1850.

In May, 1850, the Rev. Alfred Tyler first came to the town, and settled as pastor in July of that year. During Mr. Tyler's ministry a school was erected and extensive alterations and improvements effected in the chapel ; the re-opening services were held on Tuesday, October, 2nd, when two sermons were preached by the Rev. Dr. Allon, of Islington. Mr. Tyler held the pastorate till 1878, when, through failing health, he felt compelled to resign, much to the regret of the people to whom he had ministered for so many years. Those who knew Bury 50 years ago tell us it was not a bed of roses for dissenters ; and yet through the course of a long ministry while faithful to the great principles for which Congregationalism stands, and never lowering the flag of Independency, it was said, by those who knew him, he never made an enemy. Mr. Tyler was a musician of more than ordinary ability, and for years the Whiting St. choir was famous throughout the county. For some years Mr. Tyler filled the office of County Secretary, and, together with his close friend, John Browne, of Wrentham, rendered valuable services to the churches of the county, especially in the villages. Mr. Tyler passed to his rest in 1887.

In 1878 upon the resignation of Mr. Tyler, the Rev. David Lazonby was invited to and accepted the pastorate. After an uneventful ministry of four years he resigned in August, 1882, and went to America. In 1883, mainly through the efforts of the Rev. W. H. Cole, of Northgate Street,* the two causes were united, and Mr. Cole became the first pastor of the united church. In 1887 new schools were built to meet the needs of a growing Sunday school. In September, 1897, Mr. Cole resigned his charge and entered into business. After some years of business life he returned to the ministry and accepted the pastorate of Ashwood Road, East Grinstead, where he remained till his death, which took place on March 8th, 1913.

* See Northgate Street, p. 152.

In April, 1898, the Rev. A. J. Brown, then pastor of Pheasants Hill, Hambleden, accepted a call to the Pastorate, and still continues the honoured and respected Pastor of the church. During Mr. Brown's ministry considerable alterations to the church buildings have taken place.

In August, 1904, a monument commemorating the martyrdom of John Copping and Elias Thacker, who were hanged in the town in 1583, for disseminating the writings of Robert Browne, was erected in front of the church, and was unveiled by the Rev. C. Silvester Horne, M.A. In 1912 the church was thoroughly renovated at a cost of £400. The re-opening sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon, of London.

NORTHGATE STREET.

We have seen that a secession took place from the Whiting Street Church during the ministry of Mr. Dewhirst. A place of worship was opened for them on Angel Hill, on September 18th, 1825; the Rev. Thomas Morell, of Wymondley, preached in the morning and evening, and the Rev. J. Blakie in the afternoon; and, notwithstanding the circumstances under which the place was opened, in the afternoon of that day Mr. Morell preached at the meeting house at Whiting Street, by the request of Mr. Dewhirst. The Rev. Matthew Teula, from Spalding, became their first pastor in 1826. A chapel was built in Northgate Street, and was opened on the 10th of June, 1828, and Mr. Teula continued in the pastorate till the latter end of 1835. He afterwards became pastor of Old Gravel Lane, St. George's in the East, London.

In the following year the Rev. Joseph Elliott, of Coward College, accepted the call to the pastorate, and was ordained October 4th, 1836. He continued pastor for ten years, resigning in 1846. He was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph C. Bodwell, M.A., who resigned in 1850, and went to America, and settled at Framlingham, near Boston. He was a man of very considerable scholarly attainments and filled an important place in the theological life of America as the following brief obituary notice indicates:—

“Died July 17th, 1876, at Mount Desert, Maine, U.S., the Rev. Joseph C. Bodwell, D.D., recently professor of Homiletics at the Theological Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut; and formerly Congregational minister at Bury St. Edmunds and Weymouth, England, aged 68.”

The next pastor was the Rev. John F. Guenett, from Fleetwood, who came in 1850, and removed in 1857 to Point-in-View, Lympstone. In 1857 the Rev. William Bealby came from Oakengates,

and remained till 1860, when he was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Anthony, B.A., from Springhill College, who removed to Truro in 1867.

In the same year (1867) the Rev. George Williams, from Aylesbury, accepted the pastorate and was ordained in March of that year. He remained till 1870, when he removed to Boston, Lincolnshire, and in the following year the Rev. John Christien, from North Shields, commenced his ministry here, and resigned in 1878. In 1866 the chapel underwent a thorough renovation at a cost of £600.

In 1878 the Rev. W. H. Cole, of Castle Hedingham, accepted a call to the pastorate and entered upon his ministry in September of that year. From the commencement of his ministry at Bury Mr. Cole saw the necessity for uniting the divided forces of Congregationalism if a strong church was to be built up, and set himself to the task of amalgamating Northgate Street and Whiting Street. After long discussion and careful negotiations this was brought about in 1883. Mr. Cole became the pastor of the United Church, which agreed to make its home in Whiting Street. For some years the building in Northgate Street was used for evangelistic services and Sunday school; ultimately it was sold to the Primitive Methodists, by whom it is still occupied.

FELIXSTOWE.

THE cause at Felixstowe owes its origin to the generosity and foresight of a number of Ipswich gentlemen who, to meet the religious needs of this popular watering place, with its increasing number of visitors, and rapidly growing population, erected in 1892 an iron building on the Ranelagh Road, near the cliff. The church for many years was interdenominational, and was known as "The Free Church." The pulpit was occupied by ministers of all the free churches who, in return for the service thus rendered, occupied the Manse free of charge. In the course of years the almost phenomenal growth of the place had the effect of narrowing the original conception of the church. The Wesleyans and Presbyterians erected commodious buildings for their own denominational uses, leaving the "Free Church" practically an Union Church of Congregationalists and Baptists. In the year 1896 it was felt that the increasing needs of the place demanded something more than the occasional sundry supplies on the old lines. If the church was to keep pace with the growing district and the constant influx of visitors, a settled pastor was necessary, and the Rev. John Stewart, of Bexhill, accepted the invitation of the church and became the first stated pastor. Mr. Stewart was a man of large experience, broad sympathies, and rare intellectual culture. Prior to taking up his work at Bexhill he had been the Principal of University College School at Hastings; so that he brought to his work at Felixstowe the culture and experience of years of scholastic work, inspired by a rare devotion and sanctified common sense. Not only at Felixstowe, but throughout the county he proved himself a sane leader and trusted friend.

Soon after his settlement in this popular East Anglian resort he saw immense possibilities for Congregationalism, if only promptly seized and wisely used. His impetuous spirit moved much more quickly than the cautious East Anglian had been accustomed to. He felt if the church was to be a really living and growing organisation, and worthy of its place among the free churches of the district, it must strike out on new lines. The building was an unattractive one, and altogether inadequate for the needs of the place; but to erect a new building that would satisfy all the requirements of the church, was a task to which the congregation felt itself unequal. But undaunted by difficulties Mr. Stewart took the first step in the new departure by purchasing a piece of land at the corner of Ranelagh Road and Cobbold Road,

on his own initiative, and erecting a neat building, which he named "Wycliffe Hall." The people were amazed at the rapidity with which the work was undertaken and carried through; and in a few weeks from laying the foundation the congregation removed to its new quarters.

For some years the church was continued as a Union Church, but eventually difficulties arose on the question of administration which led to a separation; the Baptists removing to Hamilton Hall, the Congregationalists remaining at Wycliffe Hall, the division of property being amicably settled by arbitration.

Mr. Stewart remained as pastor of the Congregational Church till 1907, when he resigned having accepted the joint pastorates of Twyford and Wargrave, Berkshire, where he remained till his death in 1908.

In 1909 the Rev. F. T. Astbury, of Tavistock, accepted the call to the pastorate, and still continues the honoured and trusted leader of an increasingly vigorous and progressive cause. A movement has been started for the erection of church buildings more in keeping with the character and demands of this growingly popular seaside resort than the present building, which the church has largely outgrown.

WRENTHAM.

SAMUEL Baker, Esq., of Wattisfield Hall, in his "Experiences," dated August 3rd, 1667, says :

"I was born at a village called Wrentham, which place I cannot pass by the mention of without saying this much : that religion has there flourished longer, and that in much purity ; the gospel and grace of it have been more clearly and powerfully preached, and generally received ; the professors of it have been more sound in the truth, and open and stedfast in the profession of it in the hour of temptation ; have manifested a greater oneness among themselves, and have been more eminently preserved entire from enemies without (albeit they dwell where Satan's seat is, encompassed with his malice and rage) than, I think, in any village of the like capacity in England ; which I speak as my duty to the place, but to my particular shame, rather than otherwise, that such a dry and barren plant should spring out of such a soil."

The Brewsters, of Wrentham Hall, "were gentry of consideration in their county for a long period" ; they espoused the Puritan cause, and "appear to have attained their highest elevation during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell," and were, without doubt, mainly instrumental in producing that state of things so graphically described above.

In 1587, Richard Mowse was instituted to the Rectory of Wrentham, on the presentation of Francis Brewster, Esq. There is no doubt that he was the Puritan who was appointed preacher in Yarmouth in 1575, who suffered imprisonment there under Bishop Freeke, in 1582. He died, and was buried at Wrentham, March 27th, 1609 ; shortly after which, in the same year, the Rev. John Phillip commenced his pastoral labours here. On the 6th of January, 1611-12, he was married, at Wrentham, to Elizabeth, the sister of Dr. William Ames, "that worthy Professor of Divinity at Franeker."* This choice had a considerable influence upon his after career, for Calamy tells us that, by means of Dr. Ames, Mr. Phillip "had no small furtherance in his studies ; and that intimate acquaintance with him increased his inclination to the Congregational way." He was a man of good learning, sound doctrine, consistent life, and laborious usefulness—"a very profitable and useful preacher," and therefore obnoxious to that intolerable prelate, Matthew Wren, by whom he was "chased out of Old into New England for his Nonconformity."

* Dr. Thomas Goodwin.

He had been under surveillance in the time of Wren's predecessor, as appears by the following document preserved in the Record Office. Hugh Peters wrote a letter to him, from which we learn that he and his friends were looking forward to the episcopal visitation with some forebodings, and Peters assured him of a welcome in Holland.

"Dearly and beloved Sir,

I have received yrs, and thank you heartily for that you write concerning Mr. Ward ; truly he hath not done well, making many suffer through his melancholy fitts ; I pray wish him to come away ; we have a place or two (as I write) looking for good men, and this country cannot supply them.

Mr. Burgesse is answered, but how the books will come into men's hands is a question. Dr. Ames will be here settled next month, and we shall desire both to see you. The Lord our God make us useful to each other, and both to the churches of God.

Good Sir, let us knowe how things goe with you the next visitation. We suppose things doe. . . . The Lord in mercy doe you good in all thinges, in whome I am.

Yrs,

Hugh Peters."

"Rotterdam, 23 of June, 1633.

"To the Reverend, my very worthy friend, Mr. Phillipp, at Wrentham, these, etc., etc. Leave this letter with Abraham Wheeler's wyfe."

The history of the preservation of this letter is very curious. Bishop Corbet had intercepted it on its arrival at Yarmouth, perused it, copied it, and then forwarded it to Mr. Phillip by a sailor boy, in order to remove all suspicion. This agent of his lordship in all probability expressed his readiness to convey a reply to Peters, in order that he might put it into the hands of the Bishop, who desired to obtain it that it might be used as evidence against the writer ; but Mr. Phillip was on his guard, and the gibing bishop, when transmitting his copy to Laud, expressed his disappointment thus :

"This is a copy of a letter which I intercepted at Yarmouth.

The prototype was sent to Phillip (after my reading) by a sailor's boy ; I had hoped to receive his answer, but the Right Reverend Phillip was too crafty."

Laud simply notes that he received the paper, August 30th, 1633.

Mr. Phillip continued to occupy his position here for some time after this, but was deprived in the year 1638, when he went to America. His arrival in America was not unexpected. Some of his parishioners had gone there in the previous year, and it appears that "the Christian people of Dedham had invited him to that

plantation beforehand." When he arrived in the summer of 1638, his Dedham friends "did expect and much endeavoured to obtain his guidance in the first beginning" of their ecclesiastical relations. He did not, however, accept their invitation, but being much in request, "and called divers ways, could not resolve, but at length upon weighty reasons concerning the public service of the church and foundation of the College, he was persuaded to attend to the call of Cambridge," and "he might have been the first head of that blessed institution."*

His sister-in-law, Mrs. Ames, went over to New England and had land and £40 granted her by the Salem authorities in 1637; and it was probably owing to her settlement that Mr. Phillip was decided to take up his abode in Salem or its neighbourhood. At any rate, we find that a movement was made, December 31st, 1638, by the people of Salem to secure his settlement among them, for it was "agreed and voted that there should be a village graunted to Mr. Phillip and his company upon such conditions as the seven men appointed for the towne affaires should agree on." He was received there as a townsman, January 21st, 1640, and assigned land, eight miles every way, on condition of his remaining in the country.†

He did not, however, long remain in Salem, for on November 1st, 1640, he received a third invitation from Dedham, with which he complied. His pastorate there was but of short duration, for on the calling of the Long Parliament, he with his wife took ship on October 26th, 1641, to return to his native land.

In the following year, 1642, we find him settled again in his homely parsonage, and ministering to his old flock. He resumed his rectory of Wrentham, and there conducted the ecclesiastical affairs of his parish on Congregational principles, so far as they could be adapted to the parochial system; and so satisfied were the neighbouring Independents of his Congregationalism that when, in 1644, members of Mr. Bridge's church residing in Norwich desired to form themselves into a separate community, they not only consulted with their brethren at Yarmouth, but with Mr. Phillip also, as the only man then in the neighbourhood in whose judgment and experience they could confide. In 1643 Mr. Phillip was appointed one of the members of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and was recognised by Baillie in his letters as one of the "Independent men" there, but he was growing infirm and could not now engage in much public work; he therefore took no prominent part in the proceedings, though he attended the meetings of the Synod.

* Letter of James Savage, Boston, N.E.

† Felt's Annals of Salem and Mass. Records.

His nephew, Mr. William Ames, M.A., son of Dr. William Ames, who had graduated at Harvard College in 1645, came over in the next year from America to assist his uncle ; and here, when the Congregational Church was formally constituted, February 1st, 1649-50, he became "Teacher" of the church of which his uncle was pastor.

From records still extant it is clear that the church at Wrentham was not a "gathered," but a "reformed" church ; its pastor was rector of the parish, its place of meeting was the parish church. The members did not repudiate their former church state, but simply reformed themselves by Scripture rule, as they understood it ; and, without censuring others, pursued what appeared to them, under the circumstances, the path of duty. They asserted their liberty and reformed the church.

For ten years more the venerable pastor fulfilled the duties of his office ; but the day came at length when he must die. He had seen some years of prosperity at the close of a long and eventful life, and "fell asleep on ye 2 of September, 1660," being about 78 years of age. He was not ejected from Wrentham, but died before the Act of Uniformity came into operation.

"Mr. Thomas King, after Mr. Phillip's great decay, supplied at Wrentham," and on Mr. Phillip's decease, was presented to the living by Robert Brewster, Esq. He married the daughter of Humphrey Brewster, Esq., and was ejected in 1662. He was probably the Mr. Thomas King who was, at the same period of his ministerial life, "Preacher off the worde at Mutforde" ; and the Mr. Thomas King who was buried at Wrentham November 18th, 1683.

William Ames, M.A., of whom we have previously spoken, "not only assisted his uncle at Wrentham, but preached one part of the Lord's day at Frostenden, for many years. In 1651, on November 5th he preached a sermon at St. Paul's, before the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, etc., on 1 John ii., 20, entitled "The saints' security against seducing spirits ; or the anointing from the Holy One." Calamy says of him "He was a very holy man of the Congregational persuasion, and in all respects an excellent person."

On the Restoration he was ejected from both pulpits, but continued in "the office of Doctor" to the Congregational Church till his death. In 1672 he was licensed "a Presbyterian Teacher in the meeting house in Wrentham," and the "meeting-house in Wrentham was licensed for Presbyterian worship" May 13th. His gravestones (there are two, one at the foot and the other at the head) in Wrentham churchyard bears this inscription :

"Here Lyeth Interred The Body of William Ames (Eldest Son To The Learned Doctor Ames), Teacher of A. Congregational. Church. In. Wrentham,. Who. Departed. This. Life. on July 21., 89,. In. the. 66. Yeare. of. His. Age."

His ministry extended over a period of forty one years ; his name appears among those who "joyned in church fellowship, February 1st, 1649-50." He survived the ejection, and continued his function as teacher of the church twenty-seven years afterwards, lived to see the Revolution, and then departed to be at rest.

Mr. Ames was twice married. His first wife, Susan, was admitted into the church at one of its earliest gatherings. She was buried January 6th, 1651-2. By her he had one daughter, Elizabeth, who married Mr. Robert Smith, "minister of the gospel at Wrentham," November 6th, 1672. He was ejected from Blithborough, distant six miles from Wrentham, but neither Calamy nor Palmer had any information to give respecting him. After this event he continued at Wrentham till his death. He was buried on the anniversary of the ejection, August 24th, 1705, forty-three years after.

On August 14th, 1662, "Samuel, ye son of Edward Barker and Francis his wife, was baptised at Wrentham." This Francis was unquestionably the same person who was admitted into the church, February 27th, 1678-9, and described as "Francis Barker, widdow of Mr. Edward Barker, minister of ye gospel, asleep in Christ." Of Mr. Barker, Calamy gives an interesting account. He was ejected from Eye, in Suffolk.

"He was bred in Caius College, Cambridge, and while he was there he was high for the church ; but going through one of the churches in Norwich while a sermon was preaching there, he stayed to hear it, and was struck with a great consternation and fear, which never wore off, till he was brought to a serious repentance of all ill spent life, and a thorough reformation. Receiving some assistance from some Congregational ministers in his spiritual trouble, he afterwards fell in with them. . . . Dr. Sampson, in his papers (from whence this character is transcribed), says of Mr. Barker, that his life and doctrine were very commendable. His preaching wrought a great reformation in the Corporation, till the flood came and swept them all away. He was very humble in his behaviour, studious and thoughtful in his preparation for his sermons, and earnest in pressing the necessity of a holy life. He was much harassed with Deputy Lieutenants, indictments, and prosecutions in all courts, after the Restoration. They would not let him be quiet on his legal death. But when, not long after, viz., An. 1665, he rendered up his pious soul to God, he was out of their reach. His loss was

much lamented by his people and the serious Christians of those parts. He had a peculiar fancy for divine poetry, and completed a book of it in imitation of Mr. Herbert."

It will be observed that the baptism above referred to took place ten days before the ejection of the Nonconformists ; and probably in anticipation of this dire calamity, which fell with ruthless severity upon the families, as well as upon the persons, of the ministers, Mrs. Barker retired to Wrentham, where, during the period of maternal trouble, she might have peace. Here her Samuel was, doubtless, born ; here he was consecrated to God, and here she and her child dwelt in safety, while her husband was "harassed by Deputy Lieutenants, indictments, and prosecutions."

Mr. Augustine Plumstead, junr., was ejected from Trinity College, Cambridge, in the 29th year of his age.* At the Restoration he was Fellow of Trinity,

"Whither he came from Westminster School as King's Scholar, chosen by Dr. Arrowsmith, at that time Master of the College. He was forced to quit his fellowship on account of his Nonconformity before the Bartholomew Act, soon after the removal of Dr. Wilkins from the Mastership. Upon the coming of a new master he endeavoured to pass his degree of M.A., but could not obtain it, also on account of Nonconformity. Hereupon he left the University, and lived a private life upon his patrimony ; and for want of constant employment in preaching he applied himself to draw up a peculiar Concordance of the Bible."†

He was admitted into the church May 8th, 1661, and it was not improbable that, from this period he exercised his gifts as an occasional preacher. In 1672 a petition was presented for a license for Augustine Plumstead to be a Teacher in Norfolk ; and another that he "may be approved teacher in any licensed place of the Congregational persuasion in Wrentham" ; and on the 8th of May, Augustine Plumstead, of Norfolk, was licensed a general Presbyterian Teacher. Austin Plumstead, Independent, was licensed to preach in the house of Ann Fenn, Framlingham, Suffolk ; and the houses of Ann Fenn and John Fenn there, and the house of Thomas Buck, of Ashfield, were licensed for preaching places. From the handwriting in the Church Book, it seems evident that

* Augustine Plumstead, son of Augustine and Anne Plumstead, of Beccles, was baptised Oct. 23rd, 1634. Another son was baptised August 17th, 1636, and the mother was buried the next day. The father afterwards married again, and resided at Wrentham, where six other children were born, several of whom died in their infancy. The father was one of the first members of the Wrentham Church, and was buried in October, 1652. He left a small legacy to the church.

† Calamy.

after the Restoration Mr. Ames directed the affairs of this church till his death, in 1689, after which, when liberty of conscience was secured, and when the church was permitted to meet publicly for worship, Mr. Plumsted became the pastor and teacher of the church. He continued in the pastoral office till his death, which took place in January, 1715-16. The following inscription is on his gravestone :

“ The body of the Reverend excellent Augustine Plumstead was here interr’d, January 10th, 1715, aged 82 years.”

He was “ a learned, recluse, and pious man ; much abstracted from the world, and indifferent to the fashions and emoluments of it.”* “ He was ever esteemed a man of great integrity, plain-heartedness and primitive simplicity ; ‘ an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile,’ and a person much mortified to the world.”†

It appears from the Church Book that “ Wrentham Hall was a place of refuge or concealment for the ministers, or any of the people, in time of persecution ” ; and the foregoing accounts sufficiently shew that refugees from other quarters made Wrentham their home when cast out elsewhere. The church records inform us that during Mr. Ames’ pastorate, between the Restoration and the Revolution, 1660-1688, at least ninety persons were admitted to church fellowship ; no year passing without some addition to the church. We conclude, therefore, that though their worship must have been in secret, this church had comparative peace. Mr. Plumstead was pastor from the Revolution to the accession of George I., 1689-1716, and during this period also the church had peace. After Mr. Robert Smith’s decease, Mr. Samuel Wright, from Yarmouth, assisted Mr. Plumstead. He received a call to this office in January, 1708-9, but the Yarmouth Church demurred to his acceptance of it.

“ There was a long debate, and it was resolved a letter should be sent from this church (Yarmouth) to that in Wrentham, advising we had agreed to part with Mr. Wright freely to them for the pastoral office, otherwise not, supposing Mr. Wright might be as serviceable here as there to assist onely.” They “ agreed to meet about the letter the 31st (January, 1708-9), which was done and writt by our Reverend Pastor, signed by him and the four deacons, and to be sent by brother Baber to Laystoff, and soe forward ; not thinking it safe to goe by post.”

In May of that year he came to Wrentham to assist only ; and it was not till Mr. Plumstead’s death that he had a call to the pastoral office ; but disturbances “ arising about baptism,” he left the people

* Church Book.

† Calamy.

and went to Southwold, whither many of his old hearers followed him. Mr. Nathanael Holmes succeeded Mr. Wright ; but though he was esteemed an excellent preacher, his temper was very indifferent. He removed in 1724 to Guestwick, in Norfolk, and died January 2nd, 1732, aged 48 years. He is buried at Denton.

There seems to have been no proper settlement from the time of Mr. Plumstead's death till Mr. Samuel Hebden came. He was the last minister of the old Congregational Society in Canterbury, and was set apart to the pastoral office in Wrentham, February 17th, 1724. He was a man of considerable learning, and had a remarkably strong memory. He published several sermons ; a work on Original Sin in reply to Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, etc., His gravestone tells us that

"[He was] a judicious and solid preacher and writer in defence of the doctrines of grace in the comforts of which he lived, and died stedfast in the faith once delivered to the saints. He was xxv. years pastor of the Congregational Church in this town. He ceased not from hard study, fervent prayer, and constant preaching, till dismissed by death, January xxiii., cjdccxlviij., in the 55th year of his age."

In February, 1750-1, Mr. James Oliver came to Wrentham, and he was "settled" here September 18th following. "He was a man of great ability, and had a peculiar turn for argument ; he took pleasure in conversing with Jews and Deists, and men of all parties and persuasions," and this he could do "with judgment and calmness. He died May 25th, 1757, aged 51 years. The next pastor was the Rev. William Swetland, who was ordained September 20th, 1758. He continued his office thirty-six years, died January 21st, 1794, and was buried in the graveyard connected with the Old Meeting, Norwich. During his ministry the present chapel was built. It bears the date 1778, and was erected at a cost of £690. The chapel in which the congregation previously worshipped stood away from the village, on what is now called the old-meeting-house farm ; it was erected in 1710. Where the congregation assembled before that date is not known ; but there was a "meeting house," and it is not improbable that it was connected with the old hall.

The Rev. William Sheppard succeeded in October, 1793, and was ordained July 30th, in the following year. He was educated at Homerton, his ministry extended over fourteen years, during the early part of which the Sunday school was established. He died February 24th, and was buried in Wrentham churchyard, March 2nd, 1807.

The next minister was the Rev. Andrew Ritchie, also from Homerton. Mr. Ritchie came first to Wrentham in 1807, and

preached at intervals till his ordination, July 22nd, 1809. He came to the work here with a richly stored mind. From his early days in Scotland, the land of his birth, he had been a voracious reader; a careful and discriminating student; in theological and metaphysical discussion he was a master. All these varied gifts and endowments helped to enrich his ministry at Wrentham, and made him a power throughout the county and even beyond its borders. His character and work were suggestively summed up by the writer of his memoir in the Congregational Year Book for 1849:—

“As a pastor he was diligent in the instruction of his flock, exhorting them from house to house, catechizing the young, supplying them with reading, and exciting their taste for it; setting on foot among them many benevolent schemes, and himself taking the lead in every movement to which he urged his people. As a preacher he was distinguished for the correctness of his judgment, the explicitness of his theology, and for the comprehensive grasp of his subject. As a friend and companion he was universally prized. With his richly stored mind, lucid in judgment, ready wit, wonderfully tenacious memory, and command of words, it is no wonder that his society was generally sought after by the pious and intelligent. The beauty and completeness of his Christian character won the admiration of the ungodly.”

A writer in the Evangelical Magazine said of him:—

“The character of his mind showed itself in his preaching. He sought to give a full and consistent view of the Revelation of God in all its parts and in all their bearings one upon another. It might be truly said of him that he ‘kept back nothing that was profitable.’ His anxiety to bring before his hearers the whole word of God led him to adopt the old Scotch method of exposition, to which he devoted every alternate sabbath morning. In this manner he went through nearly all, if not all, the books of the New Testament, except some chapters in the Revelations.”

For nearly forty years he maintained a vigorous and devoted ministry at Wrentham. In June, 1848, a breakdown in health led him to seek recuperation in a change of air and prolonged rest. Accompanied by his beloved wife, he went on a visit to his son-in-law, the Rev. Thomas Fison, of Romsey, Hants. For a time hope filled his mind that he would once more take up the work he loved at Wrentham. But this was not to be; he gradually became worse and passed away December 26th, 1848. His remains were interred in the burial ground connected with Abbey Chapel, Romsey; when the Rev. Thomas Adkins, of Southampton, delivered an appropriate address.

Mr. Ritchie was succeeded in the pastorate by the Rev. John Browne, B.A., of Coward College, elder son of the Rev. James Browne, of North Walsham. He came to Wrentham September 10th, 1848, and accepted the pastorate three days before Mr. Ritchie's death, preached on January 7th, 1849, a sermon commemorate of the late pastor, and introductory to his own ministry, from I. Kings xx., 11, and was ordained February 1st, 1849, at the commencement of the bicentenary year of the church's existence. Prior to his settlement at Wrentham Mr. Browne occupied the pulpit at Lowestoft for two years from September, 1844, to August, 1846. He also spent a year as mathematical tutor at Hall Collegiate School. The great work of his life was at Wrentham, the pastorate of which he filled for nearly 40 years, in spite of all attempts to allure him to larger and more lucrative spheres. His end came suddenly on April 4th, 1886, after less than a week's illness. He had preached three times on the previous sabbath with all his old vigour, and none who heard him dreamed that it would be the last time they would hear his loved voice on earth. He truly died in harness, and one could not imagine a more fitting close to such a strenuous and devoted life. Writing of him, one of his successors says, "He had endeared himself to all classes, and was almost idolized by many of the poor, because he was always vigilant in guarding, and strong in defending them against all injustice and wrong. Being well versed in the principles and details of Common Law, he was their legal as well as their spiritual adviser and guide. He was always accessible, devoid of affectation, and intolerant of cant, while his sympathy for his flock was ever fresh and strengthening." A monument was erected to his memory in Wrentham Cemetery bearing the following inscription:—"In honour of his noble character, his bold, wise efforts on behalf of civil and religious liberty, and his faithful service for the Church of Christ."

During Mr. Browne's pastorate the church was re-pewed, and the pulpit re-modelled. The interesting feature in this renovation scheme was that the old pulpit from the parish church from which the Rev. Thomas King had been ejected in 1622 was secured by Mr. Browne, and the centre panel built into the new rostrum. It was not only in Wrentham and its immediate district that Mr. Browne's influence was felt and his worth recognised. For many years he was one of the outstanding figures of Suffolk Congregationalism, and his name was a household word in Congregational circles. His greatest literary work, his "History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk," a work revealing immense patience, research, and accurate scholarship. This book remains the standard work on the subject, and, so far as it goes, is most complete and exhaustive.

In April, 1887, the Rev. D. Besley Williams, of Bristol College, succeeded to the vacant pastorate, and for 21 years exercised a strong and cultured ministry in this quiet and secluded spot. During his ministry several structural alterations were made in the church. The pipe organ was removed from behind the pulpit and placed in the end gallery ; the vestry was enlarged, and a new heating apparatus was installed. In August, 1908, Mr. Williams accepted a call to Wooton Bassett, Wiltshire, and entered upon his ministry there in September of the same year, from whence he removed, in 1913, to Cowper Memorial Church, East Dereham.

In April, 1909, the Rev. F. Kenworthy, trained at Nottingham College, after a pastorate of eight years at South Creake, Norfolk, entered upon his ministry here. He is the present pastor.

SOUTHWOLD.

THIS town has for a long time enjoyed an evangelical ministry. In the year 1626, "on ye 14th day of June, Mr. Christopher Yonges dep'ted this life." He was succeeded by Mr. Stephen Fen, as we learn from a certificate of the church, sent by order to Oliver Cromwell in 1654, which states that "the town of Southwold is at present destitute"; that "for many years together it upheld a powerful ministry among them at the yearly charge of seventy pounds extraordinary paid out of the town's revenue, by the consent of the Corporation, until the death of the late faithful servant of Christ, Mr. Stephen Fen"; but that "they are no longer able to defray ye aforesaid charge of a minister."

Mr. Fen was succeeded here by "Samuel Stonham, preacher of God's Word at Southwold," who was buried at Wrentham, May 10th, 1659, in which year, on the 5th of November, Alexander Kirby was instituted to the vicarage and chapelry; but a Mr. Woodward appears to have been the town preacher, for he was silenced at the Restoration. Mr. Davids says he afterwards preached at Harlow, in Essex, where he seems to have founded the Baptist Church. He also founded another congregation at Little Parndon, in the same county, which is now extinct.

After the ejection this town appears to have been committed to the charge of a non-resident minister, "Master Sharpen, who had his abode at Sotterly," and preached at Southwold but once a month. There were Independents in the town in those days, and "his indulgence favoured the Separatists with the liberty and free use of the church, where they resorted weekly or oftener; and every fourth Sunday both ministers met and celebrated Divine service alternately. He that entered the church first had the precedence of officiating, the other keeping silence until the congregation received the Benediction after sermon. Most of the people attended all the while."*

It was before the year 1680 that these things were done; for in 1672 we find the house of Joseph Ireland licensed for Presbyterian (most likely Congregational) worship. After this period the Rev. James Petre was incumbent, and, from the account of him given on his tombstone, we can hardly suspect that he would permit such irregularities to continue." He was an orthodox man, who suffered many ills, and those not the lightest, for his King and for his Faith." At his coming, therefore, the Independents were

* Gardiner's Southwold, p. 212.

compelled not only to leave the church, but the town also. Undaunted by difficulties they secured a malt house at Reydon, where they met for worship. Their number at this time must have been considerable, as seventy-seven persons, chief of the Dissenters in this town, subscribed an instrument, in 1699, to secure a fixed salary to their teacher, Mr. Smith. This is the first Dissenting minister whose name is mentioned ; he was not the pastor of a church, but simply the teacher of a congregation. He probably continued in this office till about 1704, when the meeting house was enlarged, shortly after which time Mr. Jenking Lewis was the minister here. He removed to London in 1719, after which Mr. Wright came from Wrentham to this place. He resigned in 1727, and was followed by Mr. Quiney, and he by Mr. Helm.

Up to this time no church had been formed here ; the communicants residing in the neighbourhood were members at Wrentham. But on the death of the Rev. Samuel Hebdon, the pastor there, the Rev. George Wiggett, with ten other persons, entered into church covenant together at Southwold, October 11th, 1748, on which the Southwold brethren who were members at Wrentham joined them. Their first place of worship at Southwold was a fish-house, which they converted into a meeting-house, and here Mr. Wiggett preached till his death in 1752.

The Articles of Agreement, at the formation of the church, were as follows :—

“ 1. That the persons who shall first consent to join each other in church fellowship, shall mutually declare their satisfaction in each other as to their sincerity in the profession and practice of Christianity.

2. That whosoever shall, after that, desire to join themselves to us shall give an account of their competency in the knowledge of Christianity to the pastor, and of their sober life and conversation to him and the rest of the church. But

3. The manner of doing it shall be left indifferent ; whether by solemn profession made by themselves in writing, or by word of mouth, or by the testimony of credible persons best acquainted with them ; if they chose to declare themselves they shall have liberty, but still the testimony of others shall be adjoined to it ; if through bashfulness or any other cause they are averse to this method, provided their conversation be well attested, they shall be received notwithstanding.

4. If any, after admission, be guilty of sins inconsistent with a sincere profession of Christianity, they shall be admonished, reprov'd, suspended, or excluded from the communion of the church, according as the nature of the crime shall be.

5. That upon a sincere repentance, well evidenced, they shall be restored or taken into the church again.

6. Lastly. That in all matters of controversy we will be determined by the sole authority of the Bible, and wherein we are at a loss will call in the assistance of other pastors for their advice and direction."

The Rev. Thomas Marryatt, son of Dr. Marryatt, of London, succeeded Mr. Wiggett, was ordained September, 1754, but resigned at the end of 1758, and removed to Barnet. He ultimately settled as a physician at Bristol, and died May 28th, 1792.

Mr. Price, "an ingenious young man," continued only one year and then conformed; after which the Rev. John Hurrior, grandson of Mr. Hurrior, of Denton, and son of Mr. Samuel Hurrior, of Guestwick, was ordained August 6th, 1761. For thirty-two years he sustained a vigorous and useful ministry here. He died March 13th, 1793, and was buried at Denton.

The Rev. W. H. Gardiner, M.A., succeeded Mr. Hurrior in 1793, and remained till 1804, when he removed to Barnstaple. He died December 21st, 1840. The Rev. Samuel James Wall, brother of the Rev. W. Wall, of the Pavement, Moorfields, succeeded Mr. Gardiner. He was ordained here, but resigned his charge in April, 1810. He conformed to the Established Church, became Rector of Norton Subcourse, near Loddon, in Norfolk, and died there.

The Rev. Thomas Steffe Crisp, afterwards of the Baptist College, Bristol, preached here for a short time "to collect and unite the congregation which, during the latter part of Mr. Wall's ministry, had become greatly diminished." Having been instrumental in effecting this object, he recommended the Rev. Thomas Nottage, from Wymondley, who was ordained April 6th, 1811. In consequence of illness, Mr. Nottage resigned his charge, July 6th, 1823.

The Rev. Benjamin Longley, of Rotherham, came in 1824, and was ordained on October 27th of the same year; he resigned April 9th, 1835.

The Rev. W. Hopkins succeeded to the vacant pastorate in 1836. Mr. Hopkins was educated at Homerton College. After leaving College he preached for a time to a small congregation at Loughborough. His ministry here was so successful that in a short time the growing congregation necessitated the building of a new chapel, which was opened on September 10th, 1828. Mr. Hopkins was ordained on April 21st, 1830, and resigned his charge in the following year. His next pastorate was at Ripley, Hants; but some of his hearers becoming disaffected he left in 1835, and in the following year settled at Southwold, and there the last thirty years of his life were spent. As at Loughborough, so at Southwold, the congregation soon outgrew the accommodation of the old building,

and the present chapel was erected in 1837. His work here was largely increased owing to the lack of helpers. Under the heavy strain his health gave way, and early in 1865 he felt compelled to resign. He died August 1st following. After his resignation, and during the interregnum, the oversight of the church was placed in the hands of a small committee, consisting of the Rev. H. Coleman, of Halesworth, Rev. John Browne, B.A., of Wrentham, and Mr. Oliver Prentice, of Ipswich.

On August 20th, 1865, Mr. E. W. Wilson, of New College, preached, and at a church meeting held subsequently an invitation was given by a considerable majority to Mr. Wilson to undertake the duties of the pastorate for a year. Mr. Wilson objected to the length of the period on the ground that during the whole time both pastor and people would be unsettled, and the work of the kingdom of God thereby hindered. He intimated that he would be willing to take the oversight of the church till the annual meetings of the Suffolk Congregational Union in April, 1866.

At that meeting a sum of £20 was voted to Southwold in aid of its finances, and so to enable it to offer a reasonable salary to its minister. After the Union met a church meeting was immediately called, and a unanimous invitation was given to Mr. Wilson to the pastorate of the church. In May, 1866, Mr. Wilson's ordination took place, in which a number of neighbouring ministers took part. In 1868 an organ was purchased from the parish church; the chapel was thoroughly cleaned and repaired at a cost of nearly £200.

On the conclusion of the seventh year of his ministry Mr. Wilson was presented with a purse of gold subscribed by his congregation and other friends in the town.

In the December of the same year (1872) the fishermen of the town returned from their Christmas fishing after a period of exceptional storm and peril, and a thanksgiving meeting was held in the chapel. The Rev. E. Goodall walked over from Lowestoft for the occasion, although the roads were flooded, and travelling exceedingly difficult.

In May, 1880, Mr. Wilson received and accepted an invitation to Wolverton, Bucks. At a farewell meeting he was presented with a purse of money amounting to £40, subscribed by the townspeople and church members as a token of their esteem and good wishes.

The Congregational Union assembled at Rendham this year (1880), and voted £40 to Southwold for the first year from the date of the pastor's settlement.

In November, the Rev. W. J. Holder, of Westerham, Kent, was unanimously invited to the vacant pastorate, and on the first Sunday of the new year began his ministry. The Walberswick

mission, which had been closed for a number of years was re-opened. In May, 1886, Mr. Holder removed to Castle Camps, Cambridge.

The Rev. John Jones, of Hereford, succeeded. After steady, patient work the church became self-supporting, and was able to dispense with the grant from the Union. A very important renovation scheme was carried through in 1895. Alterations were made in the Lobby, and the church was rebenched throughout with pitchpine pews, and a new hot-air heating apparatus was installed. Dr. Barrett, of Norwich, preached at the re-opening. In 1906, the church, for the first time in its history, entertained the Suffolk Congregational Union, under the presidency of J. H. Grimwade, Esq., Mayor of Ipswich. A reception was held in the Town Hall by E. Pipe, Esq., Mayor of Southwold. At a luncheon, subsequently served in the Drill Hall, the Vicar of the parish, the Mayor, Town Clerk, and other members of the Corporation, were present, and voiced a welcome to the Union.

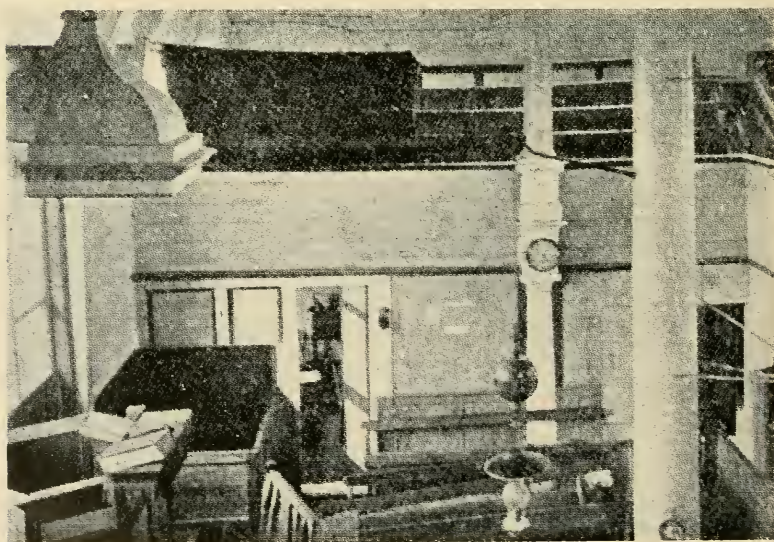
In March, 1909, Mr. Jones retired from the active ministry. At a memorable farewell meeting he was presented with a cheque for £40, and a book containing the names of subscribers. Mr. Jones spent his years of well earned retirement at Herongate, near Brentwood, Essex, where he eventually passed to his rest in June, 1917, after a long and painful illness.

In 1910, the Rev. T. Langman Moore, from Howden, in Yorkshire, became pastor, and resigned in the following year, having accepted an invitation to Cottingham, near Hull, and was succeeded by the Rev. J. L. Buddell, M.A., who resigned in June, 1918, to undertake work under the Y.M.C.A. at Salonica during the war.

In the following year the Rev. D. Clayton, from Debenham, accepted an unanimous invitation to the pastorate, and is the present minister.



WALPOLE CHAPEL. *Erected 1647.*



INTERIOR— WALPOLE CHAPEL.

WALPOLE.

THERE are no ancient records belonging to this church, but from other sources we learn that it was originally a *gathered* church, that is to say the Christian people holding Congregational principles *in and about* this central place were gathered together in church fellowship here.

Mr. Harmer mentions the existence of an ancient paper superscribed "A confession of faith made by the church at Walpole, at their first settling down, 1647." This we have not seen ; but as it clearly appears by the Yarmouth Church Book that both John Manning and Samuel Manning wrote to that church "to this effect yt upon ye 21st of this instant moneth (June, 1649) ye saints in and about Couckley did intend for to set down in gospel order," and as we can hardly suppose there was another church within a mile of them we may conclude that the "nine" in the date was mistaken for a "seven."

Heveningham, Cookley, and Walpole seem to have been intimately connected, and Mr. Habergham appears to have been their first pastor.

The following from the Yarmouth Church Records concerning Mr. Habergham, and the methods pursued in the removal of a minister from one charge to another, will be interesting.

"On the 31st of October, 1650, the church sought the Lord, by fasting and prayer, for a man to be a help meet with Mr. Bridge in the ministry." Two persons were proposed, Mr. Brewster, of Alby, and Mr. Habergham, of Heveningham and Walpole ; "reasons on both sides were seriously weighed ; the voice went for Mr. Habergham ; and two messengers were appointed to go with a letter from the church to invite him over, and to request him to accept of the call."

On the 4th of November they went "and imparted unto him the solemn call of the Church unto the Teacher's office."

"His answer was that at present he could not return his thoughts concerning it. He looked upon it as a great call, and acknowledged his own inabilities to do so great a work ; [and said] if he did see it to be a call from God, then he would come though a hundred impediments and blocks should lie in his way, and promised to be with us the next week in person and give us an answer."

"A letter was likewise sent to the church at Walpole concerning this business." November 15th, "Mr. Habergham came not according to our expectations, but two brethren from the church

at Walpole brought two letters, one from the church and the other from Mr. Habergham." The letter from the church expressed some reasons why Mr. Habergham could not come, nor accept the call. In his own letter he expressed "great sense of his own insufficiency to such a work, [and said] that he could not accept of the call, being called to preach where he is, [and he further said] that the church had some reasons which presented his way to us as altogether dark and not clear unto him."

The result of these negotiations was that Mr. Habergham resisted the tempting offer of the Yarmouth church, and continued at Walpole for some years. After a time he accepted a call to Syleham, from which place he was ejected in 1662.

The next minister was the Rev. John Manning. In the Yarmouth Church Book, in 1652, his signature appears as "Pastor of the church at Wapool." He removed to Peasenhall, whence he was ejected in 1662. A brief, but interesting account is found in the "Nonconformist Memorials II.," 435. "Mr. Manning was several times imprisoned at Bury, Ipswich, Blithburgh, etc. He was often reckoned amongst malefactors, arraigned, found guilty, premunired, etc., and spent the greatest part of his time in confinement. Indeed, there is scarce a jail in Suffolk which he was not sent to at some time or other, in the latter part of his life. When he was delivered, it was by acts of pardon which the courtiers wanted for what they had done irregularly. Notwithstanding his many imprisonments, he was a very meek and innocent man. Tho' he was scrupulous of taking oaths, he gave no occasion to think he was unpeaceable; and he got such favours with his jailers, that they sometimes trusted him to go home to visit his family and people." In 1672 he was licensed to preach in his own house at Peasenhall, as a Congregational teacher. He died in 1694.

On the removal of Mr. John Manning to Peasenhall, his brother Samuel succeeded in the Walpole pastorate. He was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. In the Milton State Papers the following entry occurs: "1654, June 15. At Cookley. Mr. Samuel Manning, Pastor. The parishes of Cookley and Walpole are reduced to one cure by consent of the inhabitants. The afore-said Mr. Manning was settled in this cure by an order of the Committee for Plundered Ministers. The profits of Cookley £25 per annum. Walpole impropriate to Mr. John Reade, who allows £15 per annum. The church altogether unable to make up the deficit of the maintenance. The said Mr. Manning is quite straightened to maintain his wife and four small children, having been visited with about seven years' sickness, and no temporal estate remaining to him."

He was ejected from Walpole in 1662. When the Indulgence was issued, he took out a license to be a Congregational teacher at his own house ; and at the same time Thomas Folkerd obtained a license to be a teacher at *his* own house at Walpole. Mr. Manning continued in this office for many years. In 1675 he published a little book, entitled "A Discovery of Sincerity and Hypocrasie," which Mr. Harmer enlarged and improved in "An Address to the Religiously Disposed, written at the desire of the Association of Dissenting ministers of the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk," and read at Debenham, October 1st, 1777.

There is no account of the time of Mr. Manning's death ; but it is supposed to have taken place before 1698, for at that date the Rev. John Hurriion, in one of his letters, states that "he was a pupil at Heveningham, by Walpole, under the tuition of one Mr. Robertson," who probably succeeded Mr. Manning. This is confirmed by Mr. Harmer, who says that "one of the elder ministers of this county remembers to have heard of one Mr. Robinson or Robertson, who was at Walpole before Mr. Compton, and was a person of considerable abilities, and educated some young gentlemen for the ministry," among whom he mentions Mr. Hurriion. But nothing further is known of him.

The Rev. John Crompton, who had been educated under Mr. Chorlton, of Manchester, came in 1704. "He was a learned, judicious, and candid minister ; of a pious, benevolent, and peaceful disposition ; and a very acceptable and useful preacher." He died December 27th, 1758, after a pastorate of fifty-four years, and lies buried in Walpole churchyard, where there is a tomb erected to his memory.

The Rev. Thomas Howe, from Floor, in Northamptonshire, succeeded. He was ordained July 11th, 1759 ; his ministry was universally acceptable for several years, but a difference with one of the congregation on a matter of personal concern led to his removal. In 1767 he accepted a call to Yarmouth, and preached "a very tender and prudent" farewell sermon to his Walpole friends, from 2 Cor. vi., 11-13, which was afterwards published under the title of "Episcopacy."

The Rev. John Walker, from Framlingham, came in 1767. He had been a pupil of Dr. Dodderidge. He was a man of good sense, of great simplicity of manners, and of eminent piety and devotion. He died August 30th, 1805, at the age of 86, and retained his faculties to the last. He was buried in Walpole churchyard, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Toms, of Framlingham, who had been his first pupil when he resided there.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Pickles, who was ordained July 23rd, 1806, and continued here till 1809.

The Rev. Thomas Spencer was here for a little while, and was succeeded by the Rev. Richard Wearing, from Rendham, in 1811. The Rev. Joseph W. Mayhew was ordained September 19th, 1822. He was originally a member at Halesworth, and was minister at Selby before he came to this place. He died January 13th, 1850. The Rev. John F. Lewis from Fairford, was here from 1850 to 1855. He was followed by the Rev. Henry Joseph Haas, from Crediton, who came May 18th, 1856, and resigned in 1870.

In 1871, the Rev. R. A. Cliff, then minister at Halesworth, undertook the pastoral oversight of Walpole ; a happy union which continued until Mr. Cliff's resignation in 1877.

In 1878 the Rev. A. A. Dowsett, having accepted the pastorate of the Church at Halesworth, undertook with it the oversight of Walpole and Cratfield, until some satisfactory arrangements could be made. It was finally decided to appoint an agent to work under the supervision of the Halesworth Church and minister.

In 1886 Mr. C. Stanley then a student of the Nottingham Institute, was invited to take up the work of these two churches (Walpole and Cratfield). The invitation was accepted, and Mr. Stanley was ordained on June 9th that year. At this service the Rev. A. A. Dowsett, of Halesworth, read the Scriptures ; the Rev. G. Hollier, of Rendham, asked the usual questions ; the Rev. J. Calvert, of Beccles, delivered the charge to the church ; the Rev. S. B. Driver, of Lowestoft, offered the ordination prayer, and the Rev. J. Morley Wright, of London, gave the charge to the minister.

Mr. Stanley continued his ministry here until 1890, when he removed to East Bergholt.

For some two or three years the work was carried on by lay agents, until 1893, when the Rev. D. L. Evans was invited to the pastorate. For some years Mr. Evans carried on a useful and valuable work, endearing himself to all to whom he ministered. His work, alas ! came to an almost tragical close in November, 1897, when after a few days' illness he passed away. His remains were laid to rest in the graveyard adjoining Cratfield Chapel. His funeral sermon was preached on November 28th by the Rev. D. M. Picton, of Halesworth.

In June the following year, 1898, the Rev. J. Collyer, of Wickham Market, accepted the invitation to the joint pastorate of Walpole and Cratfield. With Mr. Collyer's advent these churches entered upon a season of marked prosperity. The intense earnestness and almost ceaseless activity of the minister made these village causes centres of spiritual power and interest. During Mr. Collyer's ministry the old chapel underwent transformation ; the old straight-backed pews were replaced by more comfortable modern benches ; the whole structure was put into good repair, and the interior

beautified ; and the graveyard considerably enlarged. In June, 1903, much to the regret of the church, Mr. Collyer resigned his pastorate here and removed to Ingatestone, in Essex, where he continued to labour until 1908, when he retired from the active ministry, and made his home at Felixstowe. Here he threw himself, with characteristic energy, into the public life of the Church and town, giving special attention to the claims of the L.M.S., of which he was local secretary. After a painful illness, Mr. Collyer passed to his rest in November, 1912, aged 67 years.

The next minister was the Rev. J. Folley, who came from Hemsby, in Norfolk. Mr. Folley commenced his ministry at Walpole, in April, 1904, and continued until his death, which took place in June, 1907. His remains were laid to rest in the Cratfield graveyard. In 1908 Mr. G. L. Day was engaged as Evangelist and continued in the work for two years. He was followed by Mr. J. Austin, who continued for one year. In 1912, Mr. A. W. Poulson accepted the invitation of the Halesworth church to take up the work of evangelist here. Mr. Poulson's ministry has been fruitful in blessing to the churches and villages in which he has faithfully laboured. In June, 1914, Mr. Poulson resigned to enter as a student at the Congregational Institute, Nottingham.

CRATFIELD.

THE church at Cratfield dates from the closing years of the 18th Century. It originated in efforts put forth mainly by Mr. Denant, of Halesworth. In 1798 a Mr. Edward Pooley registered his dwelling house for public worship. In 1812, the cause had so prospered that it was found necessary to erect more commodious premises and to form a church. In that year the chapel was built, and a separate church properly constituted. Up to this time Congregationalists residing in Cratfield were in membership with the Halesworth Church, but upon the church being formed in their own village transferred their membership thereto. The pastors of this church have been—

The Rev. William Garthwaite, from Hackney, ordained June 15th, 1814, who removed to Wattisfield, August, 1817. Rev. Lambert Gore, who settled in 1818, and died the following year. Rev. Richard Robinson, of Blackburn Academy, settled here in 1821, and was ordained in August of that year. In 1824 he removed to Witham, in Essex, where he remained till 1848, when he removed to Whitworth, Lancashire; holding the pastorate of that church till his death in 1858. Singularly enough his father held the pastorate of the same church from 1794 to 1819. The following inscription is copied from a marble tablet in Whitworth chapel:—

This tablet is erected
in Remembrance of
the Rev. Thomas Robinson,
who was for 23 years minister of the Independent Congregation,
formerly worshipping near this spot, and who died February
26th, 1819,

Aged 56 years.

Also of his wife Elizabeth, and infant daughter.

And of the son of the above parents,

the Rev. Richard Robinson,

Who, after a ministry of 24 years over the Independent Church at
Witham, was, in 1848, chosen pastor of this Church,
The present chapel being erected during his ministry.
He died June 21st, 1858, in the 61st year of his age.

These servants of God lie interred beneath the aisle of the former chapel. The next minister at Cratfield was the Rev. George Corney, from Hackney, set apart April 27th, 1826, who removed in 1831 to Newmarket. He was succeeded in 1832 by the Rev.

James Williams, who, after a brief ministry, removed in 1833 to Lowestoft. The Revs. Hayward and Holmes held brief pastorates. In 1837 the Rev. John George was ordained here and remained till 1844. Then followed Rev. William Warren, 1844 to 1847. Rev. William Wayne, 1848 to his death in 1855. Rev. William Butcher, 1856, to 1860, when he removed to Leiston. In 1861 Dr. Salisbury undertook the oversight of the church and for many years wielded a large influence over the country side. Being a medical man, his medical as well as his pastoral services were freely given to the villagers. Dr. Salisbury resigned August 30th, 1885, but continued to reside in the neighbourhood up to his death, which took place December 14th, 1889, aged 84 years. His remains were interred in the Cratfield graveyard.

Since this time the history of this church has been practically that of Walpole, as both churches have been under the same pastoral oversight.

In 1912 the church celebrated its centenary. On Thursday, June 25th, special services were held in honour of the event. In the afternoon a sermon was preached by Rev. T. J. Hosken, of Ipswich. In the evening a public meeting was held, at which addresses were delivered by Revs. T. J. Hosken, J. Collyer (a former pastor), and Mr. A. W. Poulson, the Evangelist.

HALESWORTH.

ATOWN adjoining Walpole, never had a dissenting meeting-house till the close of the eighteenth century.

“About the year 1790, Hustings Moore opened his house for preaching here, and in 1793 it was resolved to build a meeting-house, which was opened September 19th in that year.”

Mr. Thomas Robinson was the first settled minister, but was not ordained. The Rev. John Dennant, from Hoxton, and afterwards of Bicester, Oxfordshire, came to Halesworth in April, 1796, and was set apart October 5th of that year, and continued in the pastorate forty-four years. His ministry was greatly blessed, and within twelve years from its commencement four enlargements of the chapel accommodation were required.

The church was formed before Mr. Dennant came. The Bible was taken as the sole rule of faith or practice, but it was understood from the first that the people were Calvinists and Independents, and this is specified in the trust deed. In 1836 the first stone of a new chapel was laid, and the building was opened on October 6th that year. In 1838 the Rev. John Ross, afterwards of Woodbridge, became assistant to Mr. Dennant. In April, 1840, Mr. Ross resigned, and Mr. Dennant signified his intention of resigning also as soon as a suitable successor should be found. This being satisfactorily arranged, he retired in May of that year. Mr. Dennant died in 1851, at the age of 84.

The Rev. G. Larkworthy Smith succeeded Mr. Dennant in May, 1840, and was ordained in the same year. Mr. Smith had been educated at Newport Pagnell, and was subsequently at Brackley, Northamptonshire. He resigned his charge at Halesworth on February 21st, 1850, and removed to Zion Chapel, London.

In May, 1850, the Rev. R. H. Smith was invited. He resigned January 9th, 1853, and was afterwards at Surbiton, and then at Gospel Oak.

In December, 1853, the Rev. D. T. Carnson, of Preston, Lancashire, accepted the pastorate. Mr. Carnson was educated at the Blackburn Academy, and began his ministry at Fishergate Chapel, Preston, in November, 1821, where he was ordained in the same year. The success of his ministry at Fishergate necessitated the building of a larger chapel, and in 1824 the old building was sold and the present stately

chapel in Cannon Street was erected. After a twenty-seven years' successful ministry at Preston, Mr. Carnson resigned on August 5th, 1847; he continued, however, to preside at the meetings of the church until the end of the year. On June 29th, 1848, he and his daughter were transferred to the Zion Congregational Church, Manchester, under the pastoral care of the Rev. James Gwyther. From thence he removed to Halesworth, where for ten years he exercised a helpful and inspiring ministry. Failing health led to his retirement, and, returning to Lancashire, he spent the remainder of his days at Knowle Green, near Preston. His end came suddenly on the 28th of May, 1877, when he was in his eighty-first year. His remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Knowle Green, and his funeral service was preached by the Rev. H. J. Martyn, the Cannon Street minister.

The next minister was the Rev. Henry Coleman, who came from Wickhambrook in December, 1863. He remained but a short time, removing in 1863 to Penryn, Cornwall. Towards the close of his ministry trouble arose in the church which led to a serious division, a number seceded and formed what was known as the Free Congregational Church, which met in the Assembly Room. and of which the Rev. R. A. Cliff became minister.

In March, 1869, the Rev. Abraham Jackson came from Wickham Market; he removed to Debenham in 1876. In the meantime efforts to heal the breach were made by the ministers of the district and others, which, happily, succeeded, and in 1877 the divided parties were reunited, and Mr. Cliff removed to Harleston. In January, 1878, the re-united church, by an unanimous vote, invited the Rev. A. A. Dowsett, of Ridgewell, Essex, to the pastorate, which was accepted, and Mr. Dowsett entered upon his ministry in April of that year. Under this wise and tactful pastorate the old divisions were completely healed, and the church entered upon a period of quiet and successful work. Early in Mr. Dowsett's ministry the need for more commodious premises for Sunday School work was apparent, and the present schoolroom, with vestry and classrooms, was erected at a cost of £850. In July, 1887, Mr. Dowsett resigned and removed to Ipswich to take up the important work at Crown Street.

In June, 1888, the Rev. C. H. Baker, from Cheshunt College, entered upon the pastorate, and remained until 1891, when he removed to Watton in Norfolk. From thence he went to Jamaica, under the auspices of the Colonial Missionary Society, where he died, September 15th, 1915.

He was succeeded in July, 1892, by the Rev. D. M. Picton, from Templeton, Glamorganshire. With the exception of the ministry of the Rev. J. Dennant this proved the longest pastorate in the history of the church, covering a period of more than 21 years.

In October, 1898, the centenary of the church was celebrated. To mark the event the interior of the chapel was reconstructed. This involved the erection of new galleries, the re-pewing of the area, a new organ, a new minister's vestry and classroom, at a cost of £1,400. In 1902 the chapel property, which had been erected on copyhold land, was enfranchised, at a cost of £300.

In January, 1914, Mr. Picton, having accepted an invitation to the pastorate of Witham, Essex, resigned his Halesworth charge, much to the regret of a large circle of friends. It was not for long, however, that he was permitted to work at Witham. In June, 1916, the countryside was startled to hear of the sudden and tragical death of this bright servant of Christ. An officer of the Royal Engineers, who was billeted at the Manse, was showing and explaining the working of a hand grenade which was not supposed to be a live one, when it suddenly exploded, instantly killing Mr. Picton and the officer, Mrs. and Miss Picton being seriously injured. The Vicar of the parish was present at the funeral service, with ministers and representatives from nearly every church in the county, and from several Suffolk churches where Mr. Picton was known and loved. In July, 1914, Mr. W. H. Hore, from Western College, entered upon the vacant pastorate and continued until 1918, when he removed to King's Lynn, Norfolk.

In 1919, the Rev. W. Tomalin, of Bungay, entered upon the pastorate, and still continues in the work.

SUDBURY.

THE history of Nonconformity in Sudbury carries us back to the dark and stormy days of the early years of the seventeenth century. The first name on the roll of non-conforming heroes is that of William Jenkyn, who, on his ordination, was settled a minister at Sudbury some time before 1618. Of his work here little is known. But as fathers sometimes shed lustre upon their sons, so it happens that sons not infrequently bring honour to their sires, and in the service they render give to the world some knowledge of the atmosphere in the midst of which they have been trained. The son of this honoured minister of Sudbury gained the greater honour of martyrdom in the cause of his Lord Christ and religious liberty. From the "Nonconformist Memorials" we glean the following interesting particulars:—

"William Jenkyn, A.M., of St. John's College, Cambridge, author of 'The Exposition on Jude,' was born at Sudbury, 1612, was ejected from Christ Church, London. He had been sent to the Tower for what was called Love's Plot, but, upon a petition, was pardoned. In 1684, spending some days in prayer with Mr. Flavel and other friends, he was apprehended and committed to Newgate. He petitioned King Charles for a release, as the physicians declared that his life was in danger from his close imprisonment; but the King's reply was: 'Jenkyn shall be a prisoner as long as he lives.' His treatment in Newgate was most rigorous. He died there January 19th, 1685, aged 72. A nobleman having heard of it, said to the King, 'May it please your Majesty, Jenkyn has got his liberty.' Upon which he asked with eagerness, 'Aye, who gave it him?' The nobleman replied, 'A greater than your Majesty, the King of Kings,' with which the King seemed greatly struck and remained silent."

Thus to Sudbury belongs the honour of having contributed to the martyr roll of early East Anglian Nonconformity.

William Jenkyn, the father of the martyred minister, was succeeded in 1618 by John Wilson, an intimate friend of the celebrated Dr. Ames, with whom he was fellow student at Cambridge. Mr. Wilson itinerated preaching on the borders of Suffolk and Essex. and was at length suspended and silenced by the Bishop of Norwich. He joined a little band of voluntary exiles forming in this neighbourhood, who left for America in 1630. They went to Charlestown; a church was established

there, and Mr. Wilson was installed as pastor on the 27th of August. The church was afterwards transferred to Boston, and was the first church formed there. On the same day, August 27th, 1630, the church at Watertown was established, with Mr. George Phillips for their pastor. Mr. Phillips was born at Roudham, in Norfolk, and went over at the same time with Mr. Wilson. Dr. Fuller, in a letter to Bradford, written June 28th, and expecting Winthrop's company (i.e., the company which went over with Mr. Wilson) scarcely a month after their arrival, says: "One Mr. Phillips, a Suffolk man, hath told me in private, that if they will have him stand minister by that calling which he received from the prelates of England, he will leave them." So soon did mere Puritans develop into Congregationalists in the free air of America!

There is no extant record of the formation of the Congregational Church at Sudbury, but in 1651, Mr. Samuel Crossman, who, at the same time, was Incumbent of Little Henny, in Essex, was its pastor. The church at Little Henny was in ruins, and as Sudbury was very near, it was possible for him to discharge his duties in both places. There was no Incumbent at Little Henny in 1650, and the probability is that on his appointment here, or shortly after, Mr. Crossman undertook the pastorate of the gathered church at Sudbury. He was invited to attend the Savoy Conference as pastor of the church in Sudbury, and was ejected from Little Henny in 1662. He afterwards conformed, and was rewarded with the Deanery of Bristol. He died on February 4th, 1683, aged 59 years, and was buried in the south aisle of Bristol Cathedral. After the ejection the church appears to have been disorganised, but as "there were many eminent puritans in these parts, both ministers and people, before the Restoration," we may fairly conclude that they continued to worship together after that event. From a letter written by Bishop Reynolds in July, 1670, we find that some Nonconformists in this neighbourhood were very bold, and even preached in the church of All Saints, in this town, notwithstanding the laws in force against them; and that "others in Suffolk, towards Essex, had taken up a practice to procure a parson to read some parts of the common prayer, and then they preach, and carry on the duty of the day."

The Bishop put a stop to these proceedings, but in less than two years after this time the King had issued his Indulgence, and then other arrangements for worship were made.

William Folkes had been ejected from one of the churches in Sudbury in 1662, and we are told that

“ After his ejectment he lived at Wenham, in this county, where he had a small estate, and that he succeeded Mr. Owen Stockton at Colchester, rendering his services simply for his horse hire. He was a good man and an evangelical preacher.”

But before the death of Mr. Stockton an application was made in 1672 for a licence for William Folkes, of Great Cornard, to preach in John Clarke’s house in St. Edmundsbury, and at the house of John Parish, at Sudbury, and we find that the licences were accordingly granted. These were all Presbyterians; but we also find that *Samuel Blower*, of Sudbury, was licensed to be a general Congregational teacher, and that a barn belonging to Robert Sewell, of Sudbury, was licensed for Congregational worship, in which most probably the remnants of the church assembled for some time; and Samuel Petto, who was ejected from St. Cross, Elmham, otherwise Sancroft, became their pastor. He did not, however, come to Sudbury immediately after his ejectment. He appears to have lived at Wortwell, or Aldburgh, near Denton, and was helpful to the church at Denton after Mr. Lawson’s departure; and that in 1672 his own house there was licensed as a preaching place; and that he was licensed as a Congregational minister. Another house in Redenhall, or Harleston, was also licensed for him. In each of these places he preached to small congregations, and no doubt his hearers were afterwards united with the Denton Society.

When at Sancroft, in 1657, he united with Mr. Martin, of Edgfield, and Mr. Woodal, of Woodbridge, in issuing an important work on lay preaching, entitled “ The Preacher Sent.” This was an answer to two books issued by the Provincial Assembly, of London, and Mr. John Collings, of Norwich, which condemned the practice. He was a man of considerable attainments, having received his education at Kath Hall, Cambridge, and was highly esteemed in his own church at Sudbury, and in the churches round. On the death of “ Squire Baker,” at Wattisfield, he was selected to preach the funeral sermon. He wrote an account of a parhelion, seen by him in Sudbury in 1698, which appeared in the “ Philosophical Transactions ” that year. He wrote several other works, and joined in a preface to “ Tillinghast’s Remains.” He lived to a good old age, but there is no record of the date of his death. In 1707 his son-in-law, the Rev. Joseph Maultby, was chosen joint pastor with him, and continued here till his removal to Rotterdam in 1719. “ He was a learned, correct, and judicious preacher,” and was succeeded in 1721 by the Rev. Joseph Foster, who afterwards removed to Basingstoke, where he died. The church then chose Mr.

Samuel Harvey, who was at that time assistant to Dr. William Harris, at Crutchet Friars, London; but he was removed by death, as he was upon the point of coming to Sudbury, to the great regret of his friends here. He died April 17th, 1729, in the 31st year of his age. Dr. Harris, in his funeral sermon, spoke of him in very high terms; and Dr. Watts composed an epitaph to his "pious memory":

"Here lies the ruins of a lowly tent,
Where the seraphic soul of Harvey spent
Its mortal years," etc.

In the same year, 1729, Mr. John Ford, from Wisbeach, came to Sudbury. He was sprung from a line of worthy ancestors. His great grandfather, by his mother's side, was John Vincent, "who was so harassed for his nonconformity that, though he had many children, not two of them were born in the same county."* His grandfather, Nathaniel Vincent, exhibited remarkable "zeal and courage amid the most cruel persecutions for righteousness' sake."† His father was a merchant in London. He preached to very crowded congregations at Sudbury with great acceptance and usefulness." His brother, Mr. William Ford, was minister at Castle Hedingham, in Essex. After a very successful pastorate he died September 8th, 1750, and his funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Isaac Toms, of Hadleigh, from *Phil.* i. 20.

The next pastor was the Rev. William Hextal, from Creaton, in Northamptonshire. He was "solemnly recommended to the grace of God" by several neighbouring ministers as pastor of the church, and a sermon suitable to the occasion was preached by the Rev. Dr. Doddridge, June 20th, 1751. The Doctor was now in failing health, and this was among his latest public services; he refers to it in a letter written on this date to Dr. Wood, of Norwich. Mr. Hextal continued here till 1762, when he removed to Northampton, and succeeded Mr. Gilbert, in the congregation of which Dr. Doddridge had been pastor. He died in 1777, aged 66 years. The cause of his removal from Sudbury was a strife which arose in the congregation connected with some Parliamentary election.

The church then invited Mr. Ottowell Higinbotham, a student of Daventry, and waited till 1765 before he was ordained, hoping that his great merits and abilities would overcome all political prejudices, but in vain. He was ordained November 20th, 1765, and Mr. Harmer, of Wattisfield, gave the charge on the occasion from *II. Tim.* iv. 5. A separation immediately ensued, a new meeting house was erected, and Mr. John Lombard was chosen pastor of the secession. Mr.

* Calamy. † id.

Higinbotham was unable to bear up under the evils which afflicted the church and died of consumption in 1768, in the 24th year of his age. He composed many hymns in the old supplement used at Sudbury, and several are found in the Protestant Dissenters' Magazine.

Mr. John Wood, student at Daventry, was unanimously chosen to the pastorate, and was ordained September 25th, 1770, but being afflicted with mental trouble he removed to his native county, Northamptonshire, and on his recovery settled at Creton.

The next pastor was the Rev. John Mead Ray, a student of Dr. Conder's, who was unanimously chosen, and ordained September 21st, 1774. In 1785, the congregation, which had seceded in 1765 returned and settled under Mr. Ray. In 1823, the meeting house having been rebuilt, was opened for divine worship on March 27th, on which occasion

"A sermon was preached in the morning by Mr. Hughes, of Battersea, from Nehemiah x. 39; in the evening Mr. Dewhurst, of Bury, from Proverbs xix. 2. Prayers were offered by Messrs. Cox, of Hadleigh; Ward, Saville, James, of Woolwich; Ford, of Long Melford, and by the pastor of the church. The place was filled on both occasions, and the collections amounted to £119.

"On the following Sabbath, Mr. Ray (who was in the 50th year of his ministry at Sudbury) preached from 1 Cor. ii. 2, after which the members of the church renewed the dedication of themselves to God by a solemn celebration of the Lord's Supper. The ordinance of Baptism was also administered, for the first time in the new sanctuary, on the following day; when Mr. Ray joined with the parents in devoting his great grandson unto the Lord.

"Unwilling to be encumbered with a debt, the Committee for the erection of the new building, met on the morning of the 28th, and recommended an additional percentage on their first subscriptions, to all subscribers; which being approved, and the measure adopted, Mr. Ray had the unspeakable satisfaction of informing his congregation, on the Lord's Day, that the place in which they were assembled was their own; for that provision had been made for the payment of every farthing of the debt which had been contracted by its erection."*

In 1824, in consequence of Mr. Ray's advanced age, the Rev. William Wallis became co-pastor with him; this union continued till the death of Mr. Ray, January 11th, 1837. This excellent man was pastor of the church for more than sixty-four years,

*Evan. Mag., 1823.

though for the last seven of them he was obliged to desist from preaching, owing to the failure of his sight; he continued, however, to the last to conduct the devotional services in the morning and afternoon. An extended memoir of him is given in the *Evangelical Magazine* for April, 1837.

The Rev. William Wallis, from the College at Homerton, as has been recorded, came to Sudbury in the early part of the year 1824. On the 7th of December in that year he was ordained co-pastor with Mr. Ray.

“On the preceding evening, the Rev. Dr. Pye Smith delivered an admirable discourse from Eph. iv. 18. The ordination services were introduced with prayer, and the reading of scripture, by the Rev David Ford, of Long Melford. A discourse on the Nature and Constitution of a Christian Church was then delivered by the Rev. William Walford, one of the tutors of Homerton College, who proposed the usual questions to Mr. Wallis, and received his answers. The confession of faith, though brief, was clear, comprehensive, and truly evangelical. The ordination prayer was offered up by the Rev. John Mead Ray, accompanied with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, and followed with a most solemn, affectionate, and impressive charge, which was delivered by the Rev. John Savill, of Colchester, from 2 Tim. iv. 5. A very appropriate sermon was then addressed to the people by the Rev. William Ward, of Stowmarket, from 1 Thess. iv., 1. The public services were concluded by a prayer that the divine blessing might follow them, presented by the Rev. Charles Atkinson, of Ipswich.”*

On the death of Mr. Ray, Mr. Wallis became sole pastor, and so continued till his death in the summer of 1853.

The Rev. John Gill, from Witham, entered upon his stated ministry here October 23rd, 1853, and continued till 1858, when the Rev. Joseph Steer, from St. George's, Croydon, entered upon his pastorate, July 4th of that year, and resigned in April, 1877. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. Morell Blackie, LL.B., who commenced his ministry on December 9th, 1877. After three years Mr. Blackie received an invitation to Cheltenham, which he accepted, much to the regret of his people at Sudbury.

In 1883 the Rev. William Shillito, of Newport, Mon., began his ministry here, and for six years maintained the best traditions of the church. In 1889 Mr. Shillito's health gave way and he was obliged to relinquish the pastorate. After

*Evan. Mag., 1825

some months of rest he removed to Acock's Green, Birmingham, where he died in 1901, aged 71 years.

Mr. Shillito was succeeded by the Rev. Ira Boseley, whose recognition was held in April, 1891; the Rev. William Hubbard, of Ipswich, presided, and the Rev. George Thompson, of City Road, London, attended as deputation from the London Ministers' Association. A history of Friar's Street Chapel, entitled "The Manse and the Meeting House," was published in 1893. The joint authors of this interesting work were the Rev. Ira Boseley and Mr. W. H. Hodson. In his search for material for this history Mr. Boseley discovered a Lollard MS. dealing with Sudbury; this interesting document is now preserved in the Minister's Vestry at Friar's Street. Mr. Boseley terminated his ministry here in June, 1894. He was succeeded in 1896 by the Rev. T. G. Boyne, who had been assistant to Dr. C. Berry, at Wolverhampton. During the eight years of his ministry in Sudbury Mr. Boyne greatly endeared himself to all connected with the church, and the townspeople generally. In 1905, much to the regret of his people, Mr. Boyne resigned, having accepted a call to the London Road Church, Lowestoft.

The next minister was the Rev. Duncan C. Carson, of Brighton, who settled here in 1906, and for six years exercised a powerful ministry. In 1912 Mr. Carson received an invitation to Chapel Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, which he accepted.

In 1914 Mr. Hopkin Richards, of Western College, Bristol, was invited to the pastorate, and still holds that office.

TRINITY.

AFTER Mr. Ray's decease certain doctrinal difficulties arose in Friar's Street, which led to the secession of a number of the members, who united to form a second Congregational Church. These persons, about 13 in number, met in 1837, in a private house in Curd's Lane, and here the first Sacrament was administered by the Rev. Thomas K. De Verdon, of Clare. In 1837 the church was properly constituted and Mr. Verdon became the first pastor. It is interesting to note that the first church meeting was held in the house of Miss Gainsborough, daughter of the famous painter, and was attended by ten persons, of whom Miss Gainsborough was one. In 1839 the present chapel was built, there being at that time 33 members.

In 1843 the Rev. Dr. Jackson came from Highbury, and was ordained October 4th of that year; he removed to Bury, and

was succeeded in the following year by the Rev. John Elrick, M.A., from Northallerton; and he, in 1845, by the Rev. William McNab. In 1849 the Rev. Jesse Hopwood came from Lutterworth; he removed to Oakhampton in 1854, when the Rev. Thomas Sowter came from Saxmundham. During Mr. Sowter's ministry new galleries were erected at a cost of £111.

"On Sunday, August 15th, 1858, about two o'clock in the afternoon the large flat ceiling and rafters fell in, breaking several pews, and doing much damage. Fortunately only two persons were in the building at the time and they were not hurt. The new open roof was then put in.

"A new schoolroom was in the course of erection at this time, and altogether an outlay of £367 was incurred."

In 1861 Mr. Sowter resigned and removed to Tiptree, Essex; and in the same year the Rev. George Hollier came from Thurlow. During Mr. Hollier's ministry the church enjoyed a season of great prosperity, and several important schemes were initiated and carried through. In 1865 the church underwent a complete renovation, a platform was erected, and the old shut-up pews removed and open benches substituted, the entrance doors altered, etc. This involved an outlay of £120, which amount was cleared off on the day of opening. In 1869 the Manse was purchased, which, with certain necessary alterations, cost £521.

For some time mission work had been carried on at Great Cornard by Mr. Hollier and a band of devoted workers. So successful was this work that in 1875-6 a new chapel was erected at a cost of £391. This was opened for public worship on Easter Monday, 1876. Mr. Hollier resigned in 1877, and was succeeded by the Rev. G. H. White, who settled here in 1878. In 1880 new class-rooms were erected at a cost of £117. In 1881 Mr. White resigned and was succeeded by the Rev. T. Hawke, who resigned in 1886. In 1887 the Rev. Alfred Moon entered upon the pastorate. In that year the properties in Gainsborough Street and Great and Little Cornard, now known as Rae's Trust, were conveyed to trustees by Mr. W. Rae, to augment the minister's salary. Mr. Moon resigned in 1890, and was succeeded by the Rev. C. H. Vine, of Bristol College. During Mr. Vine's ministry the enlargement of the church took place, when the present front and staircases were added at a cost of £1,000. Mr. Vine resigned in 1897 and removed to Ilford. He was succeeded in the same year by the Rev. Sydney R. Laver, of Great Yarmouth. In 1902, the church was again renovated, new windows being put in at the sides to correspond with those in the front of the building. These, with other alterations, involved an outlay of £135. In 1902

Mr. Laver resigned and removed to Roundhay, Leeds. In 1903 the Rev. Alfred Bonser, from Lincoln, accepted the call to the pastorate, and resigned in 1907, and removed to Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire; he was succeeded by the Rev. D. Clayton, from Ridgewell, Essex, who settled here in 1908.

During 1909 the Schoolroom was greatly improved through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Hitchcock, who defrayed the cost of raising the roof and decorating the interior of the building. In May, 1911, a new organ was installed at a cost of £380. In 1914, at the request of the Suffolk Congregational Union, Mr. Clayton resigned his charge here to undertake the difficult task of resuscitating the almost extinct cause at Debenham. In 1915 the Rev. J. W. Thomas, from Gotton, Beds., accepted the pastorate, and is still the minister.

WOODBIDGE.

WHILST the recorded history of the church at Woodbridge dates from the middle of the 17th century, there can be no doubt that there were Separatists—the pioneers of Congregationalism—in this town at a much earlier date. As far back as 1646 a Woodbridge schoolmistress published the second edition of a remarkable pamphlet, entitled

“The Old and Good Way Vindicated: in a treatise wherein divers errors (both in judgment and practice, incidental to these declining times) are unmasked, for the caution of humble Christians. By Elizabeth Warren.”

The purport of this pamphlet was a defence of the regular ministry, against those who would discountenance it, which was falsely said to be the position of many of the Separatists.

The support and commendation which this production received from the leading Presbyterians and others in the neighbourhood indicate the presence of a number of Separatists in the town. The pamphlet received a most convincing reply from the first pastor of the Congregational Church, in a work entitled “The Preacher Sent: a vindication of the libertie of public preaching by some men not ordained.”

“On the 18th day, of the 7th month, 1651, several serious Christians in and about Woodbridge were associated and formed into a visible Church of Christ according to the Congregational way and order,” on which occasion they entered into the following covenant:—

I. We do profess before the Lord this day that He is our God, whom we have chosen, to whom we are joined, upon whose covenant we take hold for all that we want, to whom we give up ourselves, according to that covenant and all that we have.

II. We do and will, in the power of His Spirit, receive Jesus Christ our King, Priest, and Prophet, depending upon Him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that glorying, we may glory in the Lord.

III. We will, through grace, endeavour to know the Scriptures more fully, which only are able to make us wise unto salvation, that we may embrace all the promises, obey all the precepts, walk in all the ways laid out for us therein, being led by the Spirit and living and walking in them.

IV. We freely and cheerfully give up ourselves each to other, to become one lump and one stick in the Lord's hand; and will, the Lord assisting us, submit ourselves one to

another in the fear of God, watch over one another, bear one another's burdens, taking the same care one for another, and doing all things becoming those of the same body, and whose heart is one, and way is one in the Lord.

V. We will, the Lord helping us, endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, doing nothing through strife or vain glory, but following after things which make for quiet, and things wherein one may edify another.

VI. We will, in power received from on high, hold fast what we have received till the Lord come, obeying our governors in Him, pleasing our neighbours in Him, instructing our children in the knowledge of His will, observing all the laws of His house, the laws of the Sabbath, prayers, fasting, and thanksgiving, hearing our Great Prophet in all things, walking after Him, that we may give no offence to Jew nor Gentile, nor to the Church of Christ, but may exercise ourselves unto Godliness, which hath the promise of this life and of that also which is to come.

The first pastor of the church at Woodbridge was the Rev. Frederick Woodall, who is described as "a man of learning, ability, and piety, a strict independent, zealous for the fifth monarchy, and a considerable sufferer after his ejectionment." He continued to be the pastor of the church for thirty years, and "was dismissed from this rugged path to the realms of eternal felicity, December 1st, 1681.

At the time the church was incorporated Mr. Woodall was not with them. It appears from the Yarmouth Church Book that he was then at Hapton. Under the date January 6th, 1651-2, there is this entry:—

"The church in Woodbridge having given Mr. Woodall a call unto the pastor's office, among them, and in opposition hereto, the church in Hapton having called him to the teacher's office; their joint desire is that messengers from hence (Yarmouth) might meet the messengers of other churches at Hapton to consider of this business on the 28th day of this instant."

On the 21st messengers were appointed to go to Hapton "to debate the reasons both for Mr. Woodall's remove unto Woodbridge and stay at Hapton." The conclusion arrived at was "that there is greater necessity for Mr. Woodall to attend the service of Christ at Woodbridge than at Hapton:

"1. Because the church at Woodbridge lieth destitute of the ordinances of the gospel, which the church at Hapton do and may enjoy after his dismissal.

" 2. Because we do not see how he can make full proof and discharge of his ministry in that office the church at Hapton have called him unto.

" 3. Because of his inclination to entertain the desires of our brethren of the Church at Woodbridge .

" Signed in the names of the messengers of the churches by

" Mr. Crossman, pastor of the church at Sowberry (Sudbury),

" M. John Manning, pastor of the church at Wapool (Walpole),

" Mr. Sa. Habbergham, pastor of the church at Sylam."

This is an interesting record of a very early " Council of Reference "; it shows how such Councils were constituted, under what kind of circumstances they were called into being, what sort of questions they discussed, and how they announced their conclusions.

Mr. Woodall was a man holding very definite opinions, for which he was prepared to suffer. In 1658, he, with Mr. Martin, of Edgfield, and Mr. Petto, of Sanicroft, published an interesting book, entitled "The Preacher Sent," in which he vigorously defended lay preaching. This book was a reply to two books by the Provincial Assembly of London, and Mr. John Collins, of Norwich, which condemned that practice. One is not surprised to find that so sturdy an Independent, and firm a Fifth Monarchy man, met with considerable opposition after the Restoration. He had to contend with " a tedious embarrassment, through the infamous persecuting spirit that for many years prevailed, and considerably cramped the success of his ministry and the increase of that flock of which this truly good and excellent man had the oversight."

Mr. Woodall at first exercised his ministry in the Parish Church. After his ejection he was assisted by Henry Stephens, who was ejected from Kettleburgh, till both were silenced and imprisoned.

In 1672, Mr. Woodall was licensed a Congregational teacher in Woodbridge, and the house of Jonathan Basse was licensed for worship, and afterwards the church appears to have assembled in a room adjoining the Ship Inn, near the Quay.

After Mr. Woodall's death the church was for some years like an " ark tossed upon tempestuous waves, and had little or no rest "; but the people were eventually providentially directed to the Rev. George Bidbank, who became their pastor. The Church Book narrative, written some years after, states that he had been for many years eminently serviceable to the Christians on the Debenham side, and that they, with great difficulty, could be persuaded to give him up. And a printed state-

ment declares that " Mr. B. had previously been pastor of a church at Debenham, etc. These appear to be scarcely correct, as we find that he was admitted a member of the church at Yarmouth, April 1st, 1673; and that on November 7th, 1689, he desired his dismission, being called by the church in Woodbridge to be their pastor, which was assented to." He might have been preaching at Debenham whilst a member at Yarmouth.

In " the year of liberty," 1688, Mr. Bass, one of the members of the church, bought a piece of ground upon which the present chapel stands, and erected a meeting house capable of holding 500 persons; their new pastor came to them in 1689, and on the 30th day of the tenth month (October), 1690, the covenant, which had been drawn up and agreed to at the formation of the church, was renewed and signed by Mr. Bidbank and the forty-four persons who were then in membership. " After many fatigues and troubles in the course of his ministry," Mr. Bidbank was seized with paralysis about Michaelmas, 1706, and rendered unfit to carry on public worship.

The Rev. Henry Ward came from Lowestoft about Michaelmas, 1707, and was solicited frequently to take the pastoral office. It appears that the affairs of this church had been conducted hitherto on very rigid principles, " which prevented growth and brought it into a dwindling state." Before Mr. Ward would accept the pastorate, the church assented to several modifications, whereupon he yielded to their desires, accepted their invitation, and on August 9th, 1709, was settled in the pastoral office, with the assistance and concurrence of the neighbouring ministers.

" Mr. Wilshire, of Sweffling, began with prayer; Mr. Glandfield, of Ipswich, prayed; next Mr. Bidbank went into the desk and declared his weakness and unfitness for the pastoral work, by reason of the numb palsy, an affliction he had long been under; then he inquired of the people whether they acquiesced in Henry Ward for their pastor, which they unanimously certified by holding up their hands; whereupon Mr. Ward went up into the pulpit and declared his willingness to accept thereof; after which Mr. Mill, of Guestwick, of whose church Mr. Ward had been a member, went up and preached from Acts xx., 28; then Mr. Hurron, of Denton, read cxxii. Psalm in metre, which was sung by the congregation, and went to prayer; afterwards Mr. Beart, of Bury, prayed; then Mr. Nokes, of Beccles, sang a hymn, and also prayed; and Henry Ward concluded."

Mr. Bidbank died January 12th, 1710-11, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Glandfield, of Ipswich. He had been a good minister of Jesus Christ, " a warm, affectionate, and useful preacher, with an excellent gift in prayer."

Mr. Ward's ministry extended over a period of twenty-five years, and he died November 26th, 1734, aged 56 years. A most honourable testimony was borne to his character and ministry in a funeral sermon preached to his congregation by the Rev. W. Notcutt, of Ipswich.

The Rev. Samuel Wood, educated at Mr. Frankland's Academy, and successively minister at Wivenhoe, Lavenham, and Bishop Stortford, removed from the last-mentioned place to Woodbridge about Midsummer, 1736, and was set apart to the pastoral office the same year. He continued here about thirteen years, and died September 28th, 1748, aged 65 years. He was a faithful pastor; his funeral sermon was preached by his nephew, Mr. Samuel Wood, of Norwich.

The Rev. William Cornell, of St. Neot's, came in the beginning of April, 1749, and was settled as pastor here July 25th following. He was the son of the Rev. Ebenezer Cornell, of Colchester. Mr. Harmer preached at his settlement. He continued here for nine years, resigned his office November 5th, 1758, and accepted an invitation to Rendham.

The Rev. John Palmer immediately succeeded, and was ordained August 6th, 1759. He retired in 1787, and was followed in 1789 by the Rev. Samuel Cowell, who removed to Bristol in 1799, and died November, 1823.

The Rev. Benjamin Price commenced his pastoral labours here in November, 1799, and was ordained May 22nd following. He died September 23rd, 1823, aged 56 years. An account of him is given in the Evangelical Magazine, November, 1823.

"Rev. Benjamin Price, Pastor of the Independent Congregation at Woodbridge, died September 23rd, 1823, aged 56 years, after a lingering illness of six months.

"This able minister of the gospel was recommended to the people of Woodbridge by that truly excellent man, the late Rev. Mr. Toller, of Kettering, upon the removal of the late Samuel Lowell to Bristol.

"It was twenty-four years on the Sunday preceding his death since he preached his first probationary sermon there; after which he received an unanimous invitation from the church and congregation to become their pastor. He commenced his pastoral labours in November, 1799, and was ordained the 22nd of May following, the late Mr. Toller giving the charge, and the late Mr. Newton, of Norwich, preaching on that interesting occasion; from which period he laboured among them as 'a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.' He had not been able to preach since the last Sabbath in March, but feeling himself better, he resumed his labours on the 17th and 24th of August. The afternoon of the last-mentioned day he delivered a sermon

on the death of a female, who was admitted a member of the church at the first church meeting after his ordination, from the words 'Set thine house in order for thou shalt die and not live.' The next Sabbath he attended as a hearer on the occasional labours of another minister, who came to preach on that day: from this time he gradually grew worse, till death put a period to his sufferings, to introduce him unto the joy of his Lord."

He was succeeded, in April, 1824, by the Rev. T. Pinchbeck, from Hoddeston, who resigned in 1835. The Rev. Alexander Good was the next pastor. He came from Fordingbridge in 1836, and remained till 1840. In 1841 the Rev. Thomas Hayward came, and removed to Rochford in 1847. The Rev. F. B. Brown was ordained November 18th, 1847, and removed to Wrexham in 1855. The Rev. Aaron Duffy came from Needham Market in 1856, and resigned in 1861.

The Rev. F. Hastings came from Hackney College in 1862, and although his pastorate only lasted four years, Mr. Hastings made an impression upon Woodbridge which is yet felt; there are still members in Woodbridge who still look back to those four years of active ministry with very profound gratitude, and who still cherish the memory of Mr. Hastings. Since his Woodbridge days he has occupied important pastorates in America, Australia, and London, and after more than 50 years of active work is still in the pastorate. At the meetings of the Suffolk Congregational Union, held at Bungay, 1914, Mr. F. Messent, of Ipswich, Chairman of the Union, called the attention of the assembly to the interesting fact that it was fifty years since Mr. Hastings occupied the chair of the Union, and suggested that a telegram of congratulation be sent from the Union, which was unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. M. S. Bromet succeeded in 1867 and resigned in the following year, when he removed to Ponder's End. In 1870 the Rev. Henry Andrews came from the church at Tacket Street and laboured here for seventeen years, greatly respected and honoured by all who knew him and worked with him. In 1887 he resigned, having accepted a call to Hitchin. In the same year (1887) the Rev. William Amor accepted the pastorate and carried on a very successful ministry, with increasing congregations. During his ministry the chapel and schoolroom were renovated, and a high pressure heating apparatus was installed. During the latter part of his ministry Mr. Amor was in very delicate health, and he passed away in September, 1892.

In 1893, the Rev. A. T. Palmer, of Marden, Kent, accepted the call of the church, and laboured here for three years, removing in 1896 to Cork, Ireland.

For two years the church was without a minister. During

this time extensive alterations were carried out in the chapel premises; the old windows were taken out and replaced by cathedral tinted glass; the old square pews were removed to give place to the more modern pitch pine benches; a roomy rostrum replaced the old confined pulpit; the whole building was redecorated, and a new ventilation system was put in. The whole scheme was carried through at a cost of £500, which sum was raised in the district. During the time these alterations were in progress services were held in the Lecture Hall. On April 28th, 1898, the church was re-opened, the preacher being the Rev. Dr. Rowland, of London, Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

In 1898, the Rev. Thomas Bowes, of Hawes, Yorkshire, was called to the pastorate. During his ministry Mr. Bowes succeeded in attracting a considerable following among the young people of the town. During this time it was decided to build a new schoolroom to meet the growing demands of this increasing number of young people. This work was undertaken with characteristic energy and carried to a successful issue. The school was erected and the old building transformed into classrooms at a cost of £500. At one end of the new school a memorial window was erected, and the cost borne by three friends; at the other end an infants' room was erected, shut off from the main building by revolving shutters, so that when opened it forms a platform for lectures or concerts. The foundation stone of this new building was laid on the 253rd anniversary of the church, July, 1908, by Mr. William London, and the opening services were conducted by the Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon, of Stamford Hill, London. Mr. Bowes closed his ministry here in March, 1906, much to the regret of his people, and removed to Tonbridge, Kent.

In 1907, the Rev. Peter Husband Davies, of London, accepted the pastorate. In the early days of his ministry Mr. Davies met with a very severe accident, which for a lengthened period incapacitated him from work, and the effects of which were felt throughout his ministry.

In March, 1911, a house on St. John's Hill was purchased for a manse at a cost of £350, with the addition of £50 to put it in order. At the same time the church was presented with five handsomely carved chairs for the rostrum, each having a small brass plate attached, bearing the name of the friend to whom it was dedicated. These chairs were carved by Mr. James Ling Ward, secretary of the church. Mr. Davies resigned his pastorate in 1911 and retired to London.

In 1912 the Rev. George Packer, M.A., accepted the pastorate. He commenced his ministry full of hope, and there

appeared every promise of a very happy and successful pastorate. Mr. Packer soon won the confidence and affection of his people and the town generally. But the hopes thus inspired were doomed to failure. Death came to him suddenly on September 25th, 1913, and his remains were laid to rest in the graveyard adjoining the chapel amid every mark of sorrow and regret from the people to whom, in his brief ministry, he had endeared himself.

Once more the church was pastorless for a considerable period. In 1914 the Great War burst over Europe, and a considerable number of soldiers were drafted into the town. The schoolroom was promptly opened as a writing and recreation room, and the work done in this way met with great appreciation from the men.

In 1915, the Rev. F. J. Chaplin, of Clavering, Essex, accepted the pastorate and entered upon his work amidst all the difficulties and perplexities occasioned by war conditions. Mr. Chaplin, however, threw his energies into the work, especially among the soldiers. An interesting service was held in February, 1916, when Brigadier-General De Winton occupied the pulpit, the occasion being a special farewell service for the men and officers of the 3rd London Field Ambulance. Mr. Chaplin resigned in March, 1918.

At the close of 1918 the Rev. Thomas Bowes, who had previously held the pastorate of this church from 1898 to 1906, and who, in the intervening years, had held pastorates at Tunbridge Wells and Illminster, accepted the unanimous invitation to return to his former charge, and still holds that office.

BEAUMONT CHAPEL.

This cause owed its origin to the private beneficence of Mr. Jonathan Beaumont, who, in 1787, erected a chapel, in which ministers of the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion preached with much acceptance during the founder's life. On his decease, in 1807, the Rev. Charles Langford, who had officiated here about three years, removed to Newmarket, and the Society then existing here was dissolved; but a Congregational Church was formed, and they invited the Rev. William Seaton, from Hackney College, to preach to them; his labours were blessed, the congregation greatly increased, and a new chapel was built in 1810. Mr. Seaton laboured here for five years and then removed to Andover. From Mr. Seaton's time down to the year 1900 (?) the church was served by Congregational ministers. It then passed into the hands of the Baptists, by whom it is still held.

BECCLES.

IN the year 1429, sixteen or seventeen persons were examined and did penance for sympathising with Protestant doctrine, and with William White, the teacher,* among whom was Richard Fletcher, of Beccles, "a most perfit doctor in that sect, and can very well and perfitly expound the Holy Scriptures, and hath a book of the new law in English, which was Sir Hugh Pie's first."†

"The word of the Lord was precious in those days!"

We have seen that in the reign of Queen Mary, many martyrs to Protestant truth suffered death in the flames, "whose ashes were scattered over the county at Ipswich, Bury, Beccles," etc.

"It is vehemently suspected," says Fuller, "that three of them burnt at Beccles had their death ante dated before the writ *de hæretico comburendo* could possibly be brought down to the sheriff. And was not this (to use Tertullian's Latin in some different form) *festinatio homicidii*? Now, though charity may borrow a point of law to save life, surely cruelty should not steal one to destroy it."

These three persons, "Thomas Spicer, John Deny, and Edmund Poole, were burnt in one fire about the 21st of May, An. 1556."‡

In the following reign, William Fleming, Rector of Beccles, was suspended for nonconformity at Archbishop Whitgift's first visitation, and afterwards deprived by Bishop Freeke, for refusing to subscribe Whitgift's articles. He continued for some time to reside in Beccles.

Between 1586 and 1592, the register of Beccles records the baptisms of several children of "Mr. William Fleming, preacher of the gospel, and Anne his wife." About the year 1600, a Mr. Fleming, and very probably this, was appointed to officiate at Yarmouth, and he continued in this office twelve years. If so he returned to Beccles, where he died in 1613, and was buried September 8th.§

* This William White was a priest, who became a scholar and disciple of Wycliffe, and who, in September, 1428, was burnt at Norwich.

† Foxe I., 872, 3.

‡ Foxe III., 703-4.

§ The register says, "Bury: Master William Fleming, our minister and faythful teacher, the glory of our towné, and father of ye ministry about us."

Whether regularly or irregularly, the preaching and teaching of Mr. Fleming, and such as he was, quickened the souls of many, and in subsequent years a Congregational Church was formed. This result, however, was not produced till Cromwell had assumed the direction of the national affairs.

January 21st, 1651-2 "The motion of Christians at Beccles, concerning Mr. King and Mr. Ottey, their joining with him in the foundation" of a church, was considered by the Church at Yarmouth, which decided that "they were left free to themselves, and not to be put upon by us" (Yarmouth).

But whilst they would not exert any influence to constrain acceptance of the offer, they "rejoiced that the way of Christ goe up there," and the church expressed its willingness "to contribute what help it could to the furthering of that work."

On the 6th day of July, 1652, nine persons privately "joyned in covenant together under ye visible regiment of Christ, according to ye gospel," and on the 23rd of the same month this mutual engagement which constituted them a church, was recognised and publicly ratified, messengers from Norwich being present on the occasion, and probably others from Yarmouth also; as on July 1st, of that year, "the church" at Yarmouth "desired their brethren to goe as messengers from us to help on the work of God at Beckles."

But though the church was formed, a pastor was not chosen till July 29th, 1653. This was in all probability Mr. John Clarke, whose name stands first, and before those of Mr. King and Mr. Ottey in the church book, as a statement was given in to Cromwell respecting the church at Beccles, May 30th, 1654, headed "Mr. John Clarke, pastor," in which it is stated that he had "laboured in the gospel about twelve years in this town," and that, as he was of weak constitution. . . the church was "desirous to invite another minister" to join with him; which might "be accomplished if the State vouchsafed their assistance." But though they had chosen a pastor they were for some time in an unsettled state, and the church book notices "those many shakings we have been under in reference to our present church state." At any rate, for three years they had no public ordinances among them until, on November 12th, 1656, Mr. Robert Ottie, who was resident at Beccles at the formation of the church, and one of the original members of it, was "made pastor of ye church"; and directly after this deacons were appointed, the ordinances of the Lord's Supper, and Baptism were first administered, and it was then presently "agreed by ye church that they doe put in practice ye ordinance of singinge in ye publiq"; and thus, step by step, this infant church advanced to maturity. Its progress, how-

ever, was rudely checked by the Restoration; but Mr. Ottie continued his labours here, and God continued to bless them.

From the Nonconformist Memorials we learn that—

“Robert Ottie was a native of Great Yarmouth, where his father carried on the business of a boddice maker. He was educated at the Latin School till he was old enough to be employed in his father's trade, at which he worked several years. His inclination towards mental pursuits was so decided, that nothing but a deep sense of filial duty would have reconciled him to the manual occupation in which he found himself engaged; and so great was his regard to religious truth that, whilst he laboured with his hands, his Bible generally lay open before him. He attended meetings for prayer and edification, and on one occasion was induced to pray and expound a passage of scripture; he acquitted himself so well as to call forth the admiration of the most intelligent persons present, some of whom applied to Mr. Bridge, desiring that he would encourage so promising a young man to devote himself to the Christian Ministry. Mr. Bridge consulted with Mr. Brinsley on the question and, after receiving full satisfaction as to his qualifications, they united in advising him to do so.”

In 1672 Robert Ottaway was licensed to be an Independent Teacher in his own house at Beccles; and among the petitions still preserved is one—

“That Robert Ottie, an Independent, who lately had a license to preach in his own house at Beccles may have another to preach in the house of Robert Plumstead, late in the occupation of Thomas Meens and John Bedingfield; as also in the house of Edm. Artis.”

Accordingly we find in the “License Book,” that he obtained a license to preach at Thomas Plumstead's, but no mention is made of the house of Edm. Artis. “Mr. Ottie retained his pastorate for about thirty years. He was, as we learn from his published sermons and the testimony of Mr. Bidbank, of Denton, which accomplishes them, an earnest, animated, and useful minister, ‘abundant in labours, an interpreter one of a thousand, an Apollos mighty in the scriptures.’ ”* He died about the end of April, 1689.

On the 26th October, 1691, Mr. Joseph Tate, having been previously received into the church, was solemnly set apart to the office of its pastor, which office he resigned November 28th, 1694, when he became pastor of the Independent Church at Girdler's Hall, London. The formalities observed on this occasion are preserved.

* Rix. Bicentenary sketch.

November the 28th, 1694. "At the church meeting of the Church of Christ at Beccles, in Suffolk, Mr. Joseph Tate did then and there resign his pastorall office unto the said church from the said day, as appears under his own hand hereto subscribed.

"Witnesse my hand,
"Joseph Tate.

"The same day and yeare abovesaid, the Church of Christ, after Mr. Tate had resigned his pastorall office, did dismiss him from that office of pastor to that church at Beccles. Signed by us, by the appointment of the church, as the whole act of the church.

"EDMUND ARTIS

"FRAN HAYLOUCK

Deacons.

On the 28th July, 1697, Mr. John Killinghall was admitted a member, and on the 13th of October following, he was set apart as pastor. About two years after this he unhappily fell into sin, which called for the severest discipline of the church. He became deeply penitent, and was restored to fellowship, but did not again exercise his ministry at Beccles. After some years he was chosen pastor of a flourishing Independent Church at Deadman's Place, in Southwark, where he continued nearly forty years.

The next pastor was Mr. William Nokes. In the spring of 1688 he was at the University of Utrecht; on his return he became intimate with Dr. Watts, who revised and amplified some of his poetry, and who dedicated to him several verses on "Friendship" in 1702. He came to Beccles about the middle of 1703. He was dismissed in 1710, and undertook the charge of the congregation at Ropemaker's Alley in London. He conformed to the established church in 1712, became "disordered in his mind, and died in one of the streets in London; some think on the steps of St. Andrew's, Holborn."*

It appears from the old church book that this dismission had been a matter of grave discussion, not only in the church itself, but also in the churches in the neighbourhood.

March 13th, 1709-10. "Pursuant to the late advice given us by the Rev. Elders met at Norwich, we whose names are hereunto subscribed, being members of the Church of Christ at Beccles, have this day at a meeting of solemn fasting and prayer declared our concurrence with the advice of the said elders, and have withdrawn our communion from Mr. Nokes, our late pastor, resolving stedfastly to adhere to our church

*Harmer's MSS.

covenant in order to pursue the common interests of Christ among us."

Signed by thirteen male members of the church.

And here it is to be observed that in this matter of dismissing a pastor, neighbouring churches were consulted and their advice taken.

They withdrew their communion with him, but do not give their reasons. In a subsequent entry it is stated that "in the year 1710, there arose a difference in the church about their pastor, Mr. Nokes, and the church had advice from the elders in Suffolk and Norfolk, to clear ther hand of him as pastor." No doubt these reasons were sufficiently grave. An incident in connexion with this painful event is very affecting. On account of Mr. Nokes' dismissal, "Mr. John Mowsir deserted the communion of the church, and the church withdrew from him; but in October, 1715, he being a-dieing, desired that his name might not stand as it did upon record against him. He was reconciled to the church, and so the church was to him."

On May 16th, 1711, Mr. Edmund Spencer was received into communion preparatory to his undertaking the pastorate. For some years he was very happy with the church; but, growing old and infirm, troubles arose, and he was not kindly treated. He continued in his office nearly twenty-five years, died about 1736, was carried to Norwich, and buried in the old Meeting House.

Mr. Thomas Tingey, son of Mr. Tingey, first of Northampton, afterwards of Fetter Lane, London, was the next pastor; he was first settled at Lower Rotherhithe. On the 27th of August, 1736, he was invited to the church at Beccles and ordained pastor, with the laying on of hands, on the 8th of September following. He continued in this office till his death, about 1749.

Mr. William Lincoln was a student at Northampton, under Dr. Doddridge. He came from thence to Beccles, removed to Bury St. Edmund's, and was ordained there September 7th, 1757, and there he died, April 22nd, 1792, aged 64. Mr. John Hurriion, grandson of Mr. Hurriion, of Denton, and son of Mr. Samuel Hurriion, of Guestwick, preached here for some time; but in August, 1761, he became pastor of the Independent Church at Southwold.

Mr. Nicholas Phené, from Hoxton, came to Beccles in the Autumn of 1758; he continued here as a supply about two years and then removed to Rendham.

Mr. John Fell, born at Cockermouth, August 22nd, 1735, educated at Mile End, London, became assistant in a school at Norwich, and was invited, in 1762, to supply the vacant

pulpit at Beccles. He did not accept the pastorate, but removed, in May, 1770, to Thaxted, in Essex. He afterwards became classical tutor at Homerton, and died September 6th, 1797. For a short time Mr. Baxter Cole preached here, but did not become pastor; and as the church had been for so many years without a pastor, the membership declined until the church was on the point of extinction, only four members remaining.

Mr. Joseph Heppinstead came to Beccles from Mile End about Midsummer, 1771, with the hope of being instrumental in reviving and reorganising the church. On the 15th of May, 1773, he received an unanimous invitation to become the pastor and was ordained July 27th following. His ministry was greatly blessed and the church revived, and he continued to preside over an increasing and harmonious society to the end of his days. He died on the evening of the Lord's Day, August 29th, 1802, after preaching twice, aged 60.

Mr. Isaac Sloper, born at Devizes, May 30th, 1799, and educated at Homerton, came to Beccles, November 5th, 1802, and was ordained July 7th, 1803. He laboured diligently and successfully till attacked by paralysis, September 5th, 1832. Mr. Sloper resigned his charge on September 13th, 1833; he died November 23rd, 1835, aged 57.

In September, 1833, Mr. John Flower, from Highbury, came and received an invitation to the pastorate, October 13th. He commenced his pastoral ministrations in the February following. Mr. Flower was ordained June 5th, 1837, and retired from the ministry in October, 1873.

It will be seen from the above that for 40 years Mr. Flower filled the pastorate of this church and exerted a wide and beneficent influence, not only in Beccles, but throughout the county. In the report of his farewell meeting, taken from the "East Suffolk Gazette," October 14th, 1873, abundant evidence was given of the esteem in which he was held throughout the district. Ministers from all the surrounding churches were present to do him honour. The report opens with this personal appreciation:—"The Rev. John Flower is so widely known, and so universally respected among those who do know him, that it needs no words of ours to enhance his reputation or add to his good fame. For forty years past he has laboured in Beccles in the cause of his Divine Master, winning many hearts to Christ, and gaining by the fearlessness of his devotion to duty the respect and admiration, not only of those who agreed with his opinions and convictions, but also of those who conscientiously differed from him. That much regret should be expressed when he made known his intention of retiring from

active service was but the natural consequence of the esteem in which he was held; and that the members of his congregation and other friends not so intimately connected with him should have desired to present him with some substantial token of their respect and esteem, was but a matter of course. Accordingly when Mr. Flower expressed his intention of resigning a subscription was at once set on foot, and a sum of money collected, which was presented to him at a meeting of the members of his congregation and friends, held in the Independent Chapel on Wednesday evening last." Then follows a report of the meeting. The senior deacon, Mr. R. Ward, in making the presentation, referred in feeling terms to his long connection with Mr. Flower, and concluded by saying "It is my pleasant duty—my privilege, I ought to have said—to remind you that you are not forgotten in taking leave of us. Your leave-taking has impressed many of your own congregation, and has impressed many other friends, including many members of the Established Church, and also other Dissenting communities, and a subscription has been raised (in the easiest manner I have ever known one), and the result has been (I should have been pleased had it been greater) that I hold in my hand a purse containing bank notes for £325. I cannot say more, or I should break down, but I beg to hand you this purse as contributed by your church and friends."

On his retirement Mr. Flower removed, first to Basingstoke and then to Nottingham, to be near his children. On Sunday, June 12th, 1881, after a period of gradual decay and little suffering, this honoured servant of Christ passed to his rest. It was but fitting that his remains should rest in Beccles, where his long ministry had been spent. Accordingly the body was conveyed from Nottingham by train on the Wednesday following his death and was taken at once to the chapel, where it remained until the funeral on Thursday afternoon, which partook of a public character. Among those who took part in the service was the late Henry Richard, Esq., M.P., the first lay chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The whole ceremony was a striking tribute to the memory of a good man.

In 1875 Mr. J. H. Robinson, of Springfield College, accepted a call to the pastorate, but resigned in the following year.

In 1876, the Rev. Jonathan Calvert accepted a call to the vacant pastorate. For four and a-half years previously he had laboured successfully at St. Clement's Chapel, Ipswich. Under his energetic and inspiring ministry the church at Beccles enjoyed a season of great prosperity. His ministry appealed largely to young people, many of whom joined the

church. Within three years the old chapel, which had been twice enlarged during the forty years' ministry of the Rev. John Flower, was renovated and re-pewed, a new organ provided, and a commodious school and class-rooms built at a cost of £2,400, the whole of which was raised within five years. The progress of the church thus indicated was, by the blessing of God, maintained through succeeding years, there being a constant increase to its membership, and to its spiritual work and influence.

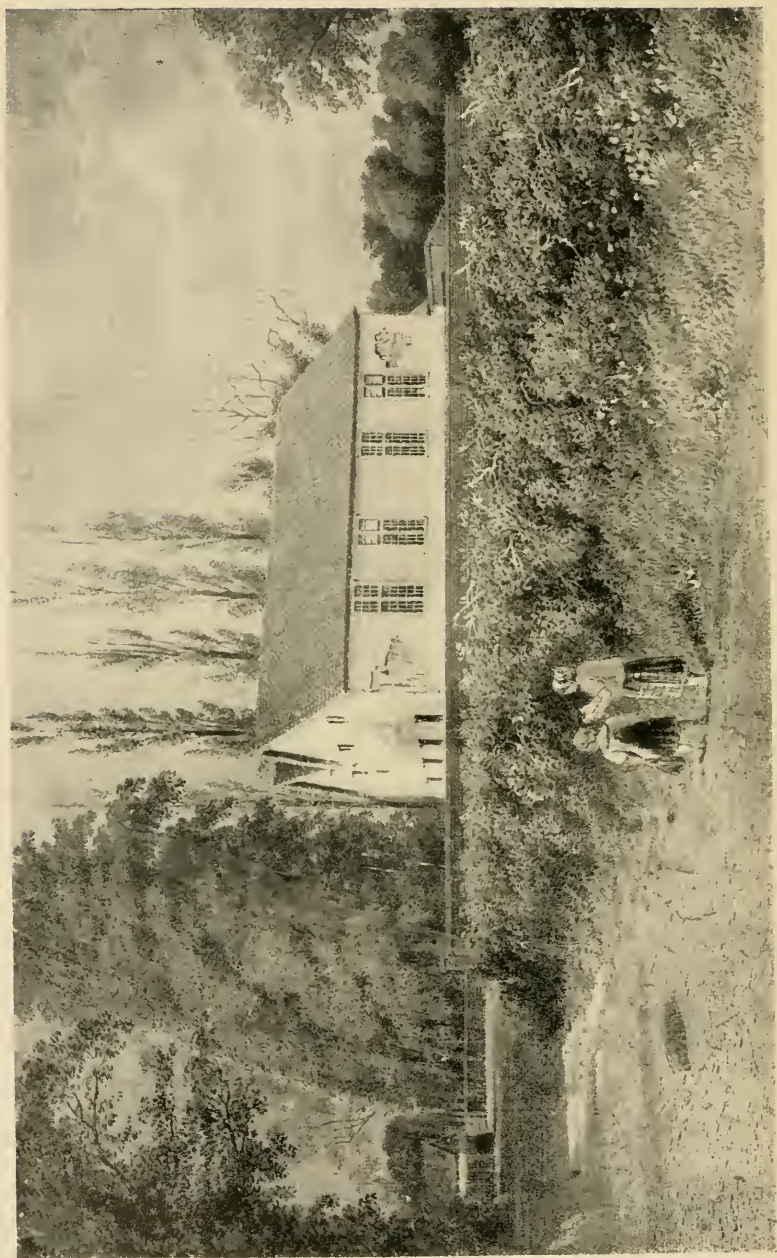
In 1888 Mr. Calvert occupied the chair of Suffolk Congregational Union, and delivered an inspiring address on "The Right Use of our Heritage and Freedom." In December, 1887, Mr. Calvert accepted a call to the newly-formed church at Dawes Road, Fulham. His succeeding pastorates were Addison Road, Nottingham; Emmanuel Church, Margate; Gloucester Street, Weymouth, and Woodford. Here he passed to his rest on July 30th, 1911.

The next minister was the Rev. W. H. Muncaster, M.A., B.D., who came from Stirling, who settled here in May, 1888. During Mr. Muncaster's ministry the present manse was built and paid for. In October, 1894, Mr. Muncaster resigned, having accepted an invitation to West Bromwich.

In December, 1894, the Rev. William Heather, M.A., of Caterham, accepted a call to this church, and entered upon his duties in the New Year of 1895. For sixteen years Mr. Heather maintained a ministry which will long be remembered for its dignity, sweetness, and scholarly power. Writing of his work, one of the deacons says:—"For sixteen years he upheld the best traditions of the Congregational ministry, and all the various organisations of our church were splendidly sustained." A flourishing P.S.A. Society was established in the early part of his ministry, to which he gave unstinted service. The new Mission Chapel, built at Kingsfield in 1909, is a lasting memorial of his zeal and devotion. Not only at Beccles, but throughout the county, Mr. Heather's worth and ability were recognised. In 1908 he was called to the chair of the Suffolk Union. For many years he was an important member of the Education Committee of the East Suffolk County Council. It was with profound regret that his decision to resign his pastorate and proceed to New Zealand was received on all sides. The church at Beccles, on his leaving, gave him many substantial proofs of the esteem in which he was held by them.

The Rev. Frank Burnet, of Upper Holloway, London, entered upon the pastorate here in March, 1912, and closed

his ministry in August, 1914, and entered the Established Church. The present minister, the Rev. W. E. Davies, commenced his ministry in 1915, after holding pastorates in Wales, Manchester, and Kelvedon, and is worthily maintaining the traditions of this old church.



THE OLD MEETING HOUSE, WATTISFIELD, SUFFOLK. *Erected 1706.*

WATTISFIELD.

THE Wattisfield Church Book, next to those of Yarmouth and Norwich, in Norfolk, and Bury and Ipswich, in Suffolk, has strong claims on our attention, and the more so as it begins to be historical when they become principally local records. It commences with:—

“The Profession of Faith as it was drawn up and agreed unto by the church at first: together with the Covenant or agreement.”

The Profession is in twenty articles; the Covenant is as follows:—

“We do covenant or agree, in the presence of God, through the assistance of His Holy Spirit, to walk together in all the ordinances of our Lord Jesus Christ, so far as the same are made clear unto us; endeavouring the advancement of the glory of our Father, the subjection of our wills to the will of our Redeemer, and the mutual edification, each of other, in His most Holy Faith and Fear.”

“This Church of Christ first sat down in the fellowship of the gospel, after the Congregational way, at Weston on the 14th of the seventh month, in the year 1654.”

Being few in number, and without a pastor, it was exposed to many dangers. For the first twenty-three years of its existence this church

“Travelled through many difficulties; passed under changes of Times; sustained much loss by death of members; but most of all endangered by intestine divisions.” Notwithstanding this it was “graciously cared for by the Lord, preserved in this low condition, and delivered from threatened ruin. It began to revive and flourish under the ministry of Mr. Thomas Benton, who, from about the year 1671, preached here, the Lord continuing an open door of opportunity, though it was a suffering day with others.”

The Thomas Benton, mentioned above, was either Thomas Benton Sen., who was ejected from Pulham, Norfolk, or Thomas Benton, Jun., who was ejected from Stratton, Norfolk; probably the latter. In 1672, Thomas Benton was licensed, as a Congregational teacher, and preached at the house of Isaac Carter at Wattisfield; and the house of Samuel Baker, a Congregationalist, was also licensed for worship here. Thomas Lawson, who had been minister at Denton, became a member of this church while it was at Weston, and on the issuing of the

Indulgence was licensed as a Congregational Teacher in his own house at Norton. Thomas Benton may, therefore, be regarded as the first pastor of this church.

After passing through its time of suffering and trouble the church "at length, by the providence of God, attained a completeness." They "renewed the Foundation Covenant in a second sitting down at Wattisfield, with Mr. Whincop as their pastor, who was solemnly set apart unto that office, and entered thereon on the second of the fifth month (May), 1678; Mr. Fred Woodall, with his companion, from the church at Woodbridge; Mr. Sam Petto, from the church at Sudbury; Mr. Thomas Milway, from the church at Bury; and Mr. Say, with Goodman Hamdin, from the church at Denton, being the elders and messengers who were present, consenting and assisting at the doing thereof."

"Edmund Whincop, M.A., of Caius Coll. Camb., was born at Middleton in 1616, whither he returned when he left the University, and kept a school and practised physic. On hearing Mr. Manning, of Yoxford, he became a Nonconformist. He afterwards became minister of that town, and then removed to other places, and finally to Leiston, where he continued till 1662. Some time after he was imprisoned at Blithburgh twenty-two weeks upon suspicion of keeping private meetings, for there was no proof of it. In 1672 the house of Edm. Whincop, at Middleton, was licensed for Congregational worship, and he was licensed as a Congregational Teacher there. In 1678 he was called to be the pastor of this church, and here he met with considerable trouble, notwithstanding the influence of Mr. Baker."[†]

"The first part of the original church book," Mr. Harmer tells us, "is in the handwriting of old Squire Baker, who was the great instrument in the hand of God of preserving this church from ruin, and of bringing its divided members into a state of peace."

Samuel Baker, Esq., was born about 1644, at Wrentham; sent to school at Beccles, where he profited by the ministry of Mr. Otte; afterwards studied at Cambridge, and at one of the Inns of Court; and having purchased the Wattisfield hall estate, with the manor and advowson of that parish, settled there in 1665. Not long before, he had married a lady of honourable family in London, named Thompson. They were for many years the great support and ornament of the Congregational Church at Wattisfield. Being a zealous Nonconformist, as well as a holy man, Mr. Baker was "a sufferer unto bonds for conscience sake." He was a member of Mr. Bidbank's church at Denton, but was not formally "dismissed" to Wattisfield until after the settlement

[†] Noncon. Mem., II., p. 433.

of the church with Mr. Whincop in 1678. The letter of dismission is dated the 16th day of the 8th month, 1678.

Mr. Baker was a person of great influence, and the head of a numerous and pious family. During an interval of nine years, in which the church at Wattisfield was destitute of a pastor, it is said to have been very much "under his direction; and his care that all things should be conducted in the most orderly manner may be seen under his own hand in the church book."

His death occurred April 11th, 1700. He was of weak constitution, and was for many years supported, under Providence, chiefly by art. But his eminence as a pattern of religion and patron of its followers, caused the churches to mourn for him, as in ancient time they mourned at the grave of Abner, and to apply to him the words of David, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen in Israel." Mr. Petto, of Sudbury, preached the funeral sermon for him from Job xix. 26. Mr. Baker was buried with his fathers in the parish church at Wrentham, where also his wife, and his wife's mother, and many of his children are laid.

"An affair happened in the year 1688, relating to civil government," says Mr. Harmer, "which gave Mr. Baker extreme uneasiness, in which, without doubt, his friends must have considered themselves as not a little concerned. The state of affairs occasioning King James to propose calling a Parliament, the Dissenters of Bury St. Edmund's proposed choosing Mr. Baker, one of the representatives of that town, in which the Mayor, who was a Papist, and Lord Dover, who had at that time a great influence at Bury, and was a great courtier, readily concurred. This would have been excessively entangling to Mr. Baker, and might have brought on heavy reproaches, perhaps from both parties. But that Parliament never sat; and Infinite Wisdom freed the dissenters from this difficulty." The first anniversary of Mr. Whincop's settlement, May 2nd, 1679, the Church observed as a day of solemn thanksgiving and prayer, having been supplied with a minister and pastor, blessed with an increase, and in other ways crowned with mercies; but shortly after, death made great inroads into their little society, and this made them very thoughtful, and they took into serious consideration the following questions:—

"What are those graces in the exercise whereof a church may hope, from the word of God, to be blessed and built up?"

"On the contrary, what are the sins which, according to the Scripture, as tend chiefly unto unchurching, or removing the candlestick, and which may be most likely, at this day, to provoke thereunto?"

Mr. Whincop was far advanced in life when he took upon him the oversight of this church, and the church book tells us that—

“1687, 5th month (July), upon the 10th day of this month, being Lord’s day, the Rev. Pastor of this church, Mr. Edmund Whincop, finished his course, in the 71st year of his age, having served the Lord in this church, in the office of a pastor, nine years, wherein he proved himself a willing, tender, faithful and laborious minister of Christ, and overseer of the flock; having served in humility of spirit, with tears and temptations, he at length entered into rest, and received the crown from the Chief Shepherd. He died at (Blo) Norton in Norfolk, whither he removed his dwelling to avoid persecution, having been often summoned to Assizes or Sessions, and under the bond of the behaviour, and exposed to other inconveniences much prejudicial to his health, and the free exercise of his ministry. He retired into another county, about four miles distant, in Norton, aforementioned, where he resided about four years, for the better safety of his person; yet failed not, by night or day, to attend the work of the ministry, wherein he spent his strength and ended his days, beloved and respected of all; endeared to his church, whose loss is so much the greater, as the harvest is great and the labourers are few, especially those that will take upon them the office of pastor. Yet is the care and kindness of God to this church remarkable in providing one of ourselves (Mr. Moore) to succeed in preaching work, and thereby serve the large opportunity occasioned by the present liberty, and general satisfaction, and as may be hoped, to great advantage.”

Mr. Whincop died at a critical period, but as was remarked at the time, after a troubled life “he died in a good old age; and that he had seen his children’s children, and peace upon Israel.”

Mr. Baker maintained a chaplain and tutor in his family, and it was a happy thing for the church, especially in those difficult times, when preaching was so frequently to be repeated on account of the small numbers that could assemble at a time, as the chaplain was of great assistance to the pastor of the church.

Mr. Thomas Elston was chaplain when Mr. Whincop settled as pastor; he continued here until the latter end of the year 1685, when he was called to the pastorate of Topcliffe, in Yorkshire. Mr. Moore, who succeeded him, was chaplain at the time of Mr. Whincop’s death, and after that event his ministry was very acceptable and useful. Applications were repeatedly made to him to undertake the pastoral office here, but without success. He removed from Wattisfield in 1689, and settled at Tiverton.

Nine years elapsed from the time of Mr. Whincop’s death till

the church was again settled with a pastor; but Mr. Baker superintended its affairs; his chaplains and other ministers preached; the church flourished, and many members were added to it.

Mr. Thomas Wickes, originally from Northamptonshire, succeeded Mr. Moore, as chaplain and tutor in Mr. Baker's house, in the year 1691, and became the second pastor of this church. He was ordained June 30th, 1696, on which occasion Mr. Langston, of Ipswich, preached from Matthew xi. 38, and Mr. Petto, of Sudbury, discoursed from I. Tim. iii., 15; Mr. Green, of Tunstead, and Mr. Bidbank, of Woodbridge, were also present and assisting.

Mr. Wicks married the eldest daughter of "Squire Baker," but she lived only a twelvemonth after. He did not possess very popular talents; but was a man of considerable learning, and of such integrity and prudence that he was greatly revered by his congregation, of which he was, for thirty-seven years, the faithful spiritual guide.

"During all which time," says the church book, "he showed himself to be a good minister of Jesus Christ, and well reported of by those that are without; a spiritual father of many spiritual children." His death was very sudden, and the church was left "in a destitute, be-widowed state, exposed to many difficulties and dangers." "But," continues the record, "the residue of the Spirit is with our God. The Lord, who is the hope of Israel, is also the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble. In Him, therefore, would we hope; upon Him would we wait, till He bring his salvation nigh to us and make our Jerusalem again a praise in the earth."

In the summer of 1733 Mr. Wickes had been to his native county, on a visit to his relations, when, on his way home, he was attacked with paralysis. He reached Wattisfield, but died two days later. The stone which marks his grave at Denton bears the following tribute to his memory and worth:

Here resteth the body of the
Rev. Mr. Thomas Wickes,
late of Wattisfield in Suffolk,
who departed this life July 1st, 1733,
aged 66 years.

A person learned, without ostentation,
an example of deep humility,
uncorrupt integrity,
still and flowing charity,
fervent piety,
and exact regularity
in the whole of his conduct.

He printed nothing but a funeral sermon for his intimate friend, the Rev. John Beart, of Bury St. Edmund's.

About a year after Mr. Wickes' death, in July, 1734, the Rev. Thomas Harmer, at the age of nineteen and three quarters, was chosen with great unanimity and affection, and the following Michaelmas he came to live among them, but "he absolutely refused to undertake the pastoral care till he should arrive beyond the age the laws of the country have thought fit to make the limit of childhood": the ordination was not therefore held till October 7th, 1735. The ministers that attended it were the Rev. Messrs. Stewart, of Bury; Wright, of Debenham; Saunders, of Denton; Scott, of Norwich; Choyce, of Stowmarket; Magee, of Wivenhoe; Williams, of East Bergholt; Hebden, of Wrentham; Cooke, of Framlingham. Mr. Scott gave the charge and prayed the ordination prayer, and Mr. Hebden preached to the congregation from Matt. xvi., 18.

September 25th, 1754, was observed by the church and congregation, with great solemnity, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer. Several neighbouring ministers were with them, and they celebrated their centenary; on which occasion, after a long historical account of the various providences of God relating to this church for a hundred years past, by the Pastor, the Rev. Mr. Hextal, of Sudbury, preached from 1 Thess., iv., 1. Mr. Harmer was born at Norwich in 1715, and was educated under the learned Mr. Eames. He died without a struggle, after a few hours' illness, on November 27th, 1788. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. J. M. Ray, of Sudbury, from 2 Tim., iv., 7-8, and was afterwards published, by desire of the congregation, together with a brief memoir, which was afterwards inserted in the *European Magazine*.

"Mr. Harmer became one of the most eminent and influential dissenting ministers of his day. His career was, in a remarkable degree, a highly favoured, not to say an enviable one. Entering upon the ministry in a situation whose duties were at once congenial to his tastes and important in themselves, yet in a place so retired as to afford ample leisure for the pursuit of learning and his favourite studies; a zealous dissenter, yet candid and courteous to all, bringing literature to illumine religious truth, and piety to direct and consecrate his talents; finding time, in his study, to lay broad the foundations of a work whose materials are being recombined, in the present days, with incalculable advantage; yet abundant, earnest, evangelical, in his labours—in the pulpit, at the prayer meeting, among the afflicted and the young—preaching in the neighbouring villages, and often engaged in occasional services at a distance; enjoying an unusual state of health, so that he was ever ready for the call

of duty; he was permitted for fifty-four years to exercise his ministry every Lord's day, and gained the esteem and confidence of the worthiest men of all parties. Beloved and highly valued by his own people, he earnestly desired that he might not outlive their affection or his own usefulness. The last sabbath of his life he preached 2 Cor., xiii., 2: 'Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of good comfort, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.' On the following Tuesday he attended a usual religious service in the vestry. The next day he spent in perfect health; before the morrow's dawn he expired without a sigh.

"Mr. Harmer's reputation as an industrious, learned man, and a useful writer, rests mainly upon his 'Observations on Passages of Scripture,' which must be regarded as a first sketch of the 'Pictorial Bible,' and other similar productions of the present day. He also wrote some general 'Remarks on the Ancient and Present state of the Congregational Churches of Suffolk and Norfolk,' reprinted, with his letters and other minor works, by Mr. Youngman, of Norwich; and besides these, he kept an exact record of the transactions of the church at Wattisfield, and of all the occasions of a special kind in which he took part elsewhere; and compiled or collected in MS. brief accounts of almost all the dissenting churches in Norfolk and Suffolk, down to 1774; which accounts were afterwards extended by the Rev. Joseph Meen, of Biggleswade, but have never been printed."†

To this MS. compilation we have been greatly indebted whilst drawing up the memorials of the churches during the period to which it relates; though we have largely supplemented the information there given, and sometimes corrected errors into which the writer had fallen from defective information.

After Mr. Harmer's decease, the Rev. Habakkuk Crabb, son of a later deacon of the church here, was invited to accept the pastorate; he came and settled among them on February 25th, 1789, apparently in much peace and harmony; but as some difficulties arose in consequence of a difference in sentiment between himself and the people, he resigned his charge in August, 1790, and shortly after settled at Royston, in Herts.

The Rev. John Driver, from Westbury, Wilts., was admitted a member of the Church June 12th, 1792, and on the 19th of the same month was publicly set apart to the office of pastor by the assistance of the elders of the neighbouring churches, viz. the Rev. Messrs. Swetland, Wrentham; Newton, Norwich, who gave the charge; Ray, of Sudbury, who preached the sermon from 2 Cor., iv., 5; Bocking, Denton; Johns, Bury; Hickmar,

† S. W. Rix's MSS.

Lavenham. Mr. Driver resigned the pastorate July 5th, 1795, and removed to a distance.

On his departure the Rev. William Hickman, of Lavenham, succeeded; he had been unanimously invited to accept the pastorate here on Mr. Crabb's removal, but he could not then see his way clear to do so; circumstances were now altered, and the Wattisfield church gave him a second invitation, August 23rd, 1795, and he accepted it, was admitted a member of the church October 2nd, by a letter of dismissal from Lavenham, dated September 17th, 1795. This letter contains the resolution passed by the church there:

"That with the deepest regret for the separation, and the most cordial wishes for the blessing of God upon his labours in the situation in which he is going, the church assents. And in the most honourable and affectionate manner recommend him to the Christian fellowship of the church. Signed, Isaac Taylor."*

Mr. Hickman continued in the pastorate here till his death, which occurred June 20th, 1814. The Church Book says: "He was the most esteemed pastor of this church for twenty years, during which period he laboured with diligence, and was eminently useful, and was much beloved by his people."

On the 1st of May, 1806, the Rev. Edward Hickman, son of the pastor, was dismissed to the church at Denton, with a view of his becoming the pastor of that church.

The Rev. Herbert Tyler, from Sawston, Cambridgeshire, was publicly set apart to the pastoral office November 16th, 1815. The ministers engaged were the Rev. Messrs. Dewhirst, of Bury; Chaplin, of Bishop Stortford; Arrow, of Lynn; and Craig, of Bocking. At this ordination service the Rev. W. Chaplin took occasion to protest against "the notion of an indelible official character derived from ordination"; and speaking of Mr. Tyler, said: "Was he not a pastor and solemnly ordained before? Doubtless he was. But I apprehend the ministers who engaged in that service, neither did nor could communicate to him any official power, in virtue of which he is entitled to take the pastoral office in this church. What was done then in a distant place, could have no prospective influence on what has since been done here. The act of the two churches are altogether distinct; and the call to the pastorate in the present instance is as independent of the first as the first was of the present. I see no ground whatever for the supposition, that the ordination of our brother in another church, authorized and qualified him in any sense to enter into the pastoral office in this;

* Afterwards pastor of the church at Colchester.

or that he was then invested with a permanent official character which is to last him through all the subsequent changes of life.”*

Mr. Tyler did not long continue in the pastorate at Wattisfield; he resigned in April, 1817, and removed to Sawbridge-worth.

The Rev. William Garthwaite, from Cratfield, accepted an unanimous invitation from this church, and came to Wattisfield, with his family, August 5th, 1817. He was recognized as pastor on the 15th of September, 1818. The Rev. J. H. Cox, of Hadleigh, introduced the service; the Rev. W. Ward, of Stowmarket, delivered a discourse on the nature of a gospel church, and asked the questions; the Rev. C. Dewhurst, of Bury, offered prayer; the Rev. J. M. Ray, of Sudbury, addressed the pastor and people; and the Rev. T. Hickman, of Lavenham, concluded by prayer.

On December 19th, 1827, Mrs. Garthwaite died suddenly while her husband was going to bring his daughters home for their holidays. This melancholly event produced a great excitement, and evoked a considerable sympathy for the bereaved family. The Rev. W. Ward, of Stowmarket, officiated at the funeral and preached, on the following sabbath, to a crowded congregation, from Matt. xxiv., 44.

Mr. Garthwaite continued in the pastorate till 1847, when he resigned. He afterwards, November 11th, 1847, married Ann, widow of the Rev. J. Ellborough, formerly of Thetford. He died at Great Ayton, Yorkshire, November 20th, 1854.

The Rev. William Warren, also from Cratfield, entered on the pastorate of this church November 14th, 1847. On September 25th, 1854, a Bicentenary Celebration was held, on which occasion the Rev. J. S. Russell, M.A., of Yarmouth, delivered an historical discourse on “Nonconformity in the Seventeenth Century,” and the pastor read an outline of the history of the church, both of which were published at the time.

In 1876 the old meeting house, which had been erected in 1706, was found to be so dilapidated as to make its removal necessary, was pulled down, and the present building put up. The foundation stone was laid by the great-grandchildren of the Rev. Thomas Harmer. The building was opened on April 27th, 1877; the Rev. Dr. Stoughton, of London, being the preacher. This building is neat, substantial, and lofty, and is generally approved as a pattern of what a village chapel should be; it is benched for 400 people; its cost, with appurtenances, was about £1,500, and it was opened free of debt.

Mr. Warren resigned his charge in 1888, after 41 years of

* Ordination Services.

faithful and fruitful ministry in this place. He continued to reside in the village, in the old Hall, the former home of the Bakers. His death took place on August 26th, 1900, and his remains were laid in the graveyard adjoining the chapel. A tablet, erected to his memory, has been placed in the chapel. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. Rosser Jones, who resigned at the end of two years. The next minister was the Rev. F. G. Basden, from Denton, Norfolk, who ministered for four years, when he retired to Snape, near Saxmundham, where he died December 30th, 1907. His remains were brought to Wattisfield, and buried in the chapel graveyard. The Rev. J. H. Fry, of Wheelock, Cheshire, followed in 1897, and for five years exercised a quiet and useful ministry here. In 1902 he was compelled to retire through ill-health. He removed to Norwich, where he died October 17th, 1913. The next minister was the Rev. C. E. Chandler, from Dover, who settled here in 1903, and who held the pastorate for five years. In July, 1904, the 250th anniversary of the church was celebrated. Mr. H. Fairfax Harwood, of Tuddenham Hall, Ipswich, presided, and addresses were delivered by the Revs. T. J. Hosken and T. A. Carritt, of Ipswich, A. J. Brown, of Bury St. Edmund's, and the pastor. Mr. Chandler resigned in November, 1913, and removed to South Molton, Devonshire. He was succeeded by the Rev. O. W. Hughes, of Huddersfield, who entered upon the pastorate in November, 1914, and still continues in that office.

WALSHAM-LE-WILLOWS.

Mr. John Salkeld, ejected from Worlington, retired to Walsham, where he had a small estate. He was some time Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge; a person of great piety, and solid judgment; of ready abilities, good learning, and facetious conversation. After his removal to Walsham he continued to preach not only in private, but frequently in public, sometimes in Walsham church, and sometimes in that of Badwell Ash, an adjoining village, and in these places he had very large auditories. It was here that on the 5th of July, 1670, Mr. Scandaret, Mr. Salkeld, and others were taken and afterwards imprisoned. It was on this, or on another occasion, whilst Mr. Salkeld was preaching, that he was disturbed by Sir Edmund Bacon, of Redgrave, and Sir William Spring, of Pakenham, who, with others, beset the church, placing people at each door that none of the congregation might escape. A disagreement took place among the leaders respecting the method of procedure; Sir Edmund wished to force Mr. Salkeld out of the pulpit, Sir William wished to let him alone till he had finished; the contention moved Sir William at length to exclaim: "We read, Sir Edmund, that the devil entered into a herd of swine, and upon my word I think he is not got out of the Bacon yet!"

In 1672, Mr. Salkeld was licensed to be a Presbyterian teacher in his own house at Walsham, and in the following year he published a sermon on John xi., 24, on the occasion of the King's declaration for liberty. The Rev. John Wilkinson, ejected from Old Newton, was also living at Walsham at this time, and he also was licensed to be a Presbyterian teacher in his own house.

It is not certain when the church here was first formed, but Mr. Salkeld has always been acknowledged to be its first pastor. After his imprisonment he was again molested: one E. S. swore some seditious words against him. He had used the words of the parliament, viz., "that Popery was coming into our nation at a great pace, and no care taken to prevent it." He was fined £100, and imprisoned in Bury Gaol for three years. He was discharged in 1686, and King William afterwards remitted the fine. Whilst in gaol he was maintained by Bury friends, and was very helpful to his fellow prisoners. He afterwards continued his ministry at Walsham many years, and died December

6th, 1699, aged 77. Mr. Chorley, of Norwich, preached his funeral sermon in Walsham church with the consent of the Impropiator.

Mr. Daniel Wright succeeded Mr. Salkeld; he was very popular and useful, especially for the ministry, but was ordained in the year 1689 by four venerable ejected ministers.* He preached first at Ousden, but removed to Walsham on Mr. Salkeld's decease. He died in 1729, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Bury, of Bury St. Edmund's. After his death the society was not kept together; some connected themselves with Wattisfield, and others with the Presbyterian congregation at Bury. A lecture which had been preached at Norton and Hunston was transferred to Walsham for the benefit of the aged and infirm. It existed in Mr. Harmer's time, and was supported by the Presbyterian fund in London.

The chapel now used in this place is held in connexion with the Wattisfield church.

* The officiating ministers were "Sam. Cradock, John Meadows, John Salkeld, and John Fairfax." The certificate given on the occasion is printed in the *Christian Witness*, 1870, p. 352.

RENDHAM.

THE Nonconformist cause at Rendham had its origin in the stormy days that preceded the Commonwealth. In 1635 the Rector of Rendham was a Rev. Mr. Powell, and the Bishop of Norwich was Dr. Matthew Wren, concerning whom a wag wrote: "The least of all these birds, but one of the most unclean." During the three years in which he was Bishop he did all he possibly could to let the Puritans see how easy it was for a Ritualistic Bishop to terrify and persecute them. In after days, when relief had come, Wren was impeached, and the articles respecting this are still extant. One of these articles was that the Bishop "enjoynd there should be no sermons upon the Lord's Days in the afternoon, or on the week days at all, without his license, and that there should be no catechizing, but only such questions and answers as are contained in the Book of Common Prayer, not allowing the ministers to expound or open the points of the same to the people; he and his under officers affirming in publick places that such an exposition might be as ill as a sermon; and the more to hearten and confirm the people in profaning the Lord's Day, he enjoynd the ministers to read publicly in their churches a book published touching sports on the Lord's Day, for not reading thereof some ministers were, by the command and direction of the Bishop, suspended." Mr. Powell was among those who refused to obey his Bishop in reading the infamous "Book of Sports." In Wren's "Parentalia" this clergyman is said to have been suspended "for many defects against his canons, but had absolution soon after granted to his proctor, without coming for it himself." Throughout the period of the Commonwealth the Rector of Rendham appears to have taken a responsible part, from a religious point of view, in matters of an important nature in the county. He was one of the eight ministers who were appointed to supervise religious affairs in the Blything Hundreds as early as 1647. This man, therefore, may be regarded as the pioneer, if not the actual founder of the Congregational Church at Rendham. I do not mean that he actually seceded from the Church of England, because he probably died before the great Protector. What I do mean to assert is that this man, more than any other, trained his congregation in Puritan doctrines and principles so thoroughly that when persecution afterwards came, there was found here a gallant band who were prepared to resist all en-

croachments upon their liberty in no uncertain manner. But though neither the Rector nor his flock seceded from the Church of England, there is every reason to suppose that this body, even in the days of the Protectorate, were in the habit of meeting together for private worship and Communion, for the Communion cups, still in the possession of the Rendham Church, bear the date 1650; the very period when brave Mr. Powell was rector. Very likely—almost certainly he attended their gatherings, and thus was formed the nucleus of the first Congregational or Independent church in this village.

Coming down to the closing years of the seventeenth century we are on more solid historical ground. Mr. Harmer says: "It is known that there was a Mr. John Manning, their minister, before the year 1694, who it is highly probable was the person who was ejected from Peasenhall, an adjoining parish, from which part of the congregation comes." He was probably one of the original members of the church at Cookley, which eventually settled at Walpole, and the first minister at Walpole; John Manning stands in the Yarmouth Church Book, January 21st, 165½, as "Pastor of the church at Walpool." It seems that John Manning, at first pastor at Walpole, gave place there to the Rev. Samuel Manning, M.A., and became the parish minister at Peasenhall, and whilst there was chosen to be the pastor of the Congregational Church, which afterwards had its meeting-house in Sweffling, and then in Rendham. In 1672 he was licensed as a Congregational Teacher in his own house at Peasenhall.

There are no extant records of the formation of this church, but the date, 1650, on the old Communion cups, referred to above taken in connexion with the facts recorded, will confirm the suggestion that it had its origin during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. This conclusion will be strengthened by a quotation from a letter sent by the church at Rendham, January, 1758, and the Rev. N. Phené, in which they say, when speaking of the truths of the everlasting gospel: "*Which truths we as a Church of Christ for more than a century have steadily adhered unto.*"

After Mr. Manning's death the Rev. Samuel Wilshire became the pastor. He subscribed the covenant of the church at Sweffling, September 23rd, 1694, and was ordained three days afterwards. He died October 3rd, 1720, having been pastor twenty-six years.

His successor was the Rev. Samuel Manning, no doubt a son of Samuel Manning, of Walpole. He had been minister for some time at Bungay, and, as such, a member of the church at Denton in Norfolk, from which church he received his dismission

to Sweffling. He settled here as preacher only, March 25th, 1721-2, at first declining a call to the pastoral office, but was afterwards ordained October 31st, 1723. He continued here till July 4th, 1731, when he accepted a call from the church at Halstead. He died January 15th, 1733-4, and is buried in Walpole churchyard. Whilst pastor at Sweffling, Mr. Harmer says: "He was a non-resident, not dwelling amongst his people, who were in general in very low circumstances, but at Walpole, seven or eight miles from Sweffling."

The Rev. Samuel Wood, son of the Rev. Samuel Wood, of Lavenham, was the next pastor. He "came to settle" January 6th, 1732 $\frac{2}{3}$, joined the church February 15th, of that year, and was ordained June 6th following. There are several circumstances connected with Mr. Wood's acceptance of the pastoral office here, which are particularly noticed in the church book; and, as they illustrate one phase of the old dissent, they are historically important. This church was one of those which "retained some very rigid notions as to the pastoral office which will not permit them to use the assistance of pastors of neighbouring churches to administer the Lord's Supper to them";* and in their invitation to Mr. Wood they urged his speedy acceptance of the call thus:—

"Hoping the length of time in which we have been debarred by Providence from the enjoyment of some ordinances may be a motive to quicken your compliance with our request." In prospect of his coming among them, the church promised Mr. Wood:—

"1. That in order to have a comfortable supply of the things of this life they will allow him £40 per annum, to be paid quarterly as far as collected, and the whole sum to be made up at the year's end, or within six weeks after.

"2 That he shall have liberty to be absent four Lord's days together in every two years to visit his relations, and that those vacancies shall be supplied at the charge of the church, as also are supplies in case of sickness or bodily infirmities, unless such sickness, etc., shall so prevail as in all probability may totally render him incapable of reassuming the work of a minister and pastor, and in such case the church shall make the best provision they can for him consistent with the continuance of the gospel among them."

Mr. Wood accepted the care and the pastorate on these conditions:—

"1 That he might have the imposition of hands at his ordination; and to prevent any occasion of offence he declared that it was his judgment that by the said Imposition neither gift, nor power are conveyed, but that he looked upon it as an

* Harmer's MSS.

innocent venerable rite in the Christian church, and be used by way of a designation of a person to be set apart; and that by himself or some other person in his behalf there should be a public declaration in the church on the day of ordination before the said Imposition should be used, that he does not believe that the essence of ordination is contained in the same, and that it is intended by him for no other end and purpose than aforesaid.

"2 And further, he requested the liberty of administering the seal of Baptism to such subjects as he should think proper.

"3 And that if in the course of Providence he should have a general invitation, by any church of the same faith with us and of godly conversation, to go over and administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper amongst them while they are destitute of a pastor, and not likely in a short time to be settled with one, in such case this church shall, by a competent number of them and their officer or officers, accompanying him to the place of meeting of such church, and there partake of the said ordinance, to give such destitute church an opportunity of joining in Communion with them; and in case this church shall neglect or refuse to comply with such request when made, then, if the said Mr. Wood do go alone and administer the ordinance to such church, it shall not be deemed a cause of uneasiness or discontent to this church; and the said Mr. Wood only intends the same upon urgent occasions, and not in a stated way and manner."

In anticipating Mr. Wood's ordination a circular letter was sent to the purely Congregational churches inviting their rev. elders to be present, and to assist in the work of the day, and requesting that "by their messengers they would manifest their sisterly Communion with them (Sweffling), and behold their order"; and it is stated that the same invitation was given to several ministers of church which were then accounted Presbyterian, "saving that it was directed only to them, only as pastors of the several churches, and the clause relating to messengers was omitted."

In the year 1747 Mr. Wood received an invitation to succeed th Rev. T. Scott at the Old Meeting, Norwich, on which occasion the Sweffling Church "made a remonstrance against the proceeding of the church at Norwich, assigning the reasons why we thought they ought to stop proceedings, and received an answer from them, though not to our satisfaction." Mr. Wood was dismissed to Norwich on September 27th in that year, the Sweffling church having been brought to give their consent. In their dismissal however, they say:—



CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL, RENDHAM. *Erected 1750.*

"And although we cannot heartily approve of transferring of pastors from one church to another (specially in circumstances situated as ours are), yet as we believe the views of this servant of Christ are honourable, and he hath principally an eye to the glory of his great Lord and Master, it is our earnest desire that a large effusion of the Spirit, its gifts and graces, may be poured down upon him, etc." This dismissal was "signed by all the brethren and deacons but one, whose scruples admitted him not to do it."

In April, 1748, the church received "intelligence of the Rev. John Burnett, of Reading, who was disposed to move for justifiable reasons." He received an invitation to the pastorate, which he accepted, was received into fellowship October 19th, and the "26th was appointed for investing him in the pastoral office"; but in 1752 he wrote to his friends that he was uneasy, and must remove; his reasons were of a personal nature. The church "laboured all they could to persuade him to desist from his design, but it had not the desired effect." They gave him ten reasons—all of which are recorded in the Church Book—but they did not convince him, and therefore, on October 8th, they gave him his dismissal to the church at Witham, in Essex, "though five of the brethren refused to sign it not being satisfied with the lawfulness of his removal." He afterwards removed to Dagger Lane, Hull. It was during the ministry of Mr. Burnett that the new meeting-house was built at Rendham, on ground at the back of the Minister's house. Mr. Burnett found a great inconvenience in crossing some meadows, which frequently were overflowed in Winter, and which lay between the meeting-house at Sweffling and his residence. The new building was erected in 1750, and was opened October 24th of that year, Mr. Scott, of Ipswich, preaching on the occasion.

The Rev. Thomas Webb, of Harleston, accepted an invitation to the pastorate, December 16th, 1753, "but came not to settle till May 12th, 1754." He was ordained July 17th, that year, and continued till December 4th, 1757, when he resigned "his gifts, not being edifying to the church." He continued to preach to them as occasion required till May 28th, 1758, when they "dismissed him from all services in the church, but such as belonged to him as a private member." "At length," says Mr. Harmer, "he totally declined the work of the ministry."

In August, 1758, they heard that the Rev. William Cornell designed to leave Woodbridge, and were advised by neighbouring ministers to give him an invitation. They "had a conference with him upon the subject, and then wrote to the church at Woodbridge, who gave consent to our proceeding"; and they then consulted the whole church and

congregation. Mr. Cornell accepted the invitation from them on October 4th, and on May 20th, 1759, he was publicly recognised as pastor. He did not long continue in his office, for "upon the 6th of April, 1760, dear Mr. Cornell died. A melancholy day for the church!" He was buried on the 10th. Mr. Harmer notes that "he was seized with a violent disorder which seemed somewhat to resemble a paralytic stroke, and suddenly departed."

The Rev. Nicholas Phené came to Rendham October 1st, 1760, he was admitted a member of the church December 1st in that year, and ordained June 6th, 1761. He removed to Gloucester in May, 1764, where he continued till the end of 1768. He afterwards went to Bradford, Wiltshire, and died in 1773*. The Rev. Samuel Braybrook came from Floor, in Northamptonshire, in June, 1765, was settled as pastor September 25th; he removed to St. Helen's, in Lancashire, in 1770. In 1784 he returned to Suffolk and became minister at East Bergholt. The Rev. John Eades came to Rendham in 1771, but did not consent to accept the pastorate. He was an awakening preacher, and the congregation increased under his ministry, but the church greatly decreased by the death of members, there being no additions under the circumstances in which they were placed. He left March 21st, 1779, and a few days after the Rev. Richard Wearing came from Lowestoft, who was ordained October 20th following. He removed at Christmas, 1806, and was afterwards settled at Walpole. The Rev. William Haward came from Hoxton Academy, February 1st, 1807, and was ordained July following. He died July 30th, 1828.

"His upright, peaceable, and useful life procured for him, not only the deserved respect of his friends, but also of the neighbourhood generally in which he lived. He was cut off in the midst of his days, and of his usefulness. He was a widower and left two sons and three daughters. The vicar of the parish and two neighbouring dissenting ministers, interested themselves in obtaining a provision for the orphans."†

The Rev. Robert Bromiley was publicly ordained to the pastoral office July 24th, 1829. In 1834 the chapel was enlarged. Mr. Bromiley died December 6th, 1836. The Rev. George Wilkins, from Newport Pagnell, succeeded, and was ordained August 2nd, 1837. He removed to New Broad Street, London, in January, 1844. The Rev. John Roger, from Lowestoft, came in August, 1844. He resigned in July, 1850, and went first to London and then to Bridport, where he died. The Rev. John

* A Mr. Phene was minister at Yarmouth in the latter part of the eighteenth century, but after 1773; he might have been a son of this gentleman.

† Evan. Mag., 1799, p. 555.

Harrison, from Isleworth, accepted the pastorate November 24th, 1850, resigned November, 1856, and went to Barsingbourn, where he died. The Rev. George Hinde came from Manchester in 1858, and removed to Whitwell, Herts, in 1871. The Rev. George Seymour, from Clare, succeeded in 1872, and continued until 1883, when he removed to London. The Church Book contains the following record:—

“At a church meeting held April 8th, 1883, the Rev. George Seymour, much to the regret of his friends, intimated his intention of resigning the pastorate in a short time, having received a very cordial and unanimous invitation from the church at Mile End Road, London, to become the pastor.

May 20th, 1883.—This day the pastor preached his farewell sermon from Acts xx., 32, to a very large congregation, after which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. This closed a very peaceful and happy pastorate of upwards of eleven years, which we trust has contributed to the glory of God.”

The Rev. George Hollier, of Sudbury, succeeded, and on October 4th, 1883, entered upon the pastorate, and continued till 1889, when, in consequence of increasing years and infirmities, he retired from the active work of the ministry.

On July 22nd, 1889, the Rev. H. Freeman, of Brandeston, was invited to the pastorate. On October 6th, 1889, Mr. Freeman entered upon his work here, and on the Thursday following recognition services were held in which the Revs. S. B. Driver, of Lowestoft; T. Wickham Tozer, of Ipswich; Luther Caws, of Stowmarket; A. A. Dowsett, of Ipswich; J. G. Brown, of Saxmundham, took part. Mr. Freeman resigned in 1895, and was succeeded by the Rev. John Sherratt, who resigned in 1897. He was succeeded in February, 1898, by the Rev. W. J. Jobbling, from New College, who, after a brief pastorate seceded to the Established Church. The Rev. G. B. File succeeded in June, 1902, and resigned in September, 1905, and removed to the West of England. He was followed by the Rev. James Parr, who “entered into residence on May 6th, of that year.” Mr. Parr resigned the pastorate in September 17th, 1908, and returned to his old church at Fenstanton. He was succeeded by the Rev. F. H. Hobbs, from Wendover, who entered upon the pastorate on April 4th, 1909, and resigned at the end of September, 1911, when he removed to Fulbourn, in Cambridgeshire. The Rev. A. J. Basden, from Reading, succeeded in 1912, and is the present pastor.

SAXMUNDHAM.

THE origin of this cause is described by the Rev. Richard Wearing, of Rendham, in a memoir of Mrs. Mary Avis, of Benhall. He says:—

“ In the year 1789, the Lord was pleased to bless the preaching of His word to four men in Benhall, together with some other branches of their families. These good men established a meeting among themselves every Wednesday night, the object of which was, reading the Scriptures, religious conversation and prayer. Their minister made a point of meeting with them.”

“ About this time a meeting was formed in Saxmundham for religious conversation; the serious people at Saxmundham, and those at Benhall, united upon these occasions. The custom of the minister was to speak to each by rotation, on which free conversation commenced, and a relation was given by each of the Society how the Lord had accomplished his designs of mercy—how the work of grace was carried on in the heart—the troubles which befel every believer—what temptations and trials each child of God had to conflict with . . . and how the Lord, by promise, by providence, and by the preaching of His word, is pleased to frustrate Satan’s designs, comfort the souls of the dejected, and speak deliverance to the captive sinner.”*

This extract affords us a view of the religious life of the period. Services on Sabbath evenings were, for many years, held here in connexion with Rendham, and the persons of whom this church was composed were members at Rendham; they became a separate church in 1850. The first pastor was the Rev. Thomas Sowter, who came from Stansfield in 1851, and removed to Sudbury in 1854. The Rev. M. Lewis, from Holywell, came in 1855, and resigned in 1856. The Rev. Robert Pearce Jones, from Sedburgh, came in 1859, and removed to Paignton in 1864. He was succeeded by the Rev. George Firth, from Gorleston, in 1864, who removed to Forest Gate in 1868. In 1869, the Rev. John C. Burnett came from Burnham, Essex (see Suffolk mag.) He resigned in June, 1877, and retired to Bedford, where he died March 21st, 1901. In April, 1878, the Rev. William Ockleford, from Clerkheaton, Yorkshire, entered upon the pastorate. He resigned in January, 1886, in consequence of ill-health, and died on May 2nd, the same year. He was suc-

* Congl. Mag., 1828, p. 504.

ceeded by the Rev. J. Garrett Brown, of Halesworth, who entered upon the pastorate on September 6th, 1886, and for 30 years maintained a ministry of rare power and influence. Not only in the church of which he was pastor, but on several public bodies in the neighbourhood, and as secretary, for many years, of the N.E. district of the Suffolk Congregational Union, Mr. Brown rendered invaluable service. During his ministry at Saxmundham the schools were enlarged, the chapel renovated, and a commodious manse erected. In 1900 the chapel was thoroughly renovated and repaired at a cost of £400. Dr. John Clifford, of London, preached the re-opening sermon.

Mr. Brown continued his ministry until 1916, when, after a long and painful illness he passed to his rest. His remains were laid in the burial-ground adjoining the chapel, amidst evidences of sorrow and regret from a large and representative assembly. The church has sought to commemorate the memory of this long and fruitful ministry by the placing of a handsome brass tablet on the chapel wall. This tablet was unveiled on Sunday, September 2nd, 1917, by the Rev. T. J. Hosken, County Secretary, who also preached the memorial sermon to a crowded congregation. The tablet bears the following inscription:—

In Affectionate Remembrance
of
John Garrett Brown,
for thirty years minister of this church,
Born May 8th, 1854,
Died November 9th, 1916.
This tablet is placed by friends, who value
his worth and cherish his memory.

Mr. Brown was succeeded by the Rev. Arthur Platts, B.A., of London, who entered upon the pastorate in October, 1917, and is still pastor.

NEEDHAM MARKET.

IN the 16th century Needham was a prosperous market town, being noted throughout East Anglia for its cloth weaving industry. The Great Plague, however, in 1665, wrought sad havoc on the trade of the town, from the effects of which it never really recovered. It was on the verge of this calamity that Nonconformity sprang into being in 1662.

The pioneer of this cause was the Rev. Thomas James, ejected from Needham, and described in the Nonconformist Memorials as "a very pious, good man, of the Congregational persuasion. He had a pretty numerous society after his ejection," ten years after which we find him licensed to be a Presbyterian teacher in the house of Thomas Weatherhouse at West Creting. This last-named person was unquestionably Thomas Weatherhouse, who was ejected from Ash. Samuel Spring was ejected from Creting in 1672, and was licensed to be a Presbyterian teacher at Needham. It thus appears that Mr. James changed places with Mr. Spring, an arrangement probably required by the "Five Mile Act."

It seems probable that Mr. James' society afterwards amalgamated with that of the eminent and Rev. John Fairfax, who was ejected from Barking, of which Needham Market is a township or chapelry. John Fairfax, M.A., of C.C. Cambridge, was the second son of Benjamin Fairfax, who was ejected from Romborough. On the 10th January, 1644, the Earl of Manchester, in pursuance of an ordinance of Parliament for regulating and reforming the University of Cambridge, admitted John Fairfax, Bach. in Arts, as a Fellow of Corpus Christi College there, he having been examined and approved by the assembly then sitting in Westminster. He was afterwards expelled for refusing to sign the Engagement tendered in favour of the new government, as established, without a King or House of Lords. After this he obtained the living of Barking-cum-Needham, and in 1662 was ejected. He still continued to reside in the parish, and to preach as occasion offered. He suffered imprisonment in Bury gaol, under the penal laws against Nonconformity, and during his confinement he wrote four letters which are extant, from which we learn the particulars of his case. In his third letter to his father, dated March 1st, 1670, he says: "We made some further attempt last term for obtaining our liberty, by way of petition to the Court of Common Pleas, the copy whereof is as follows:—



JOHN FAIRFAX, M.A.

Fellow of C. C. Coll., Cambridge, 1644.

Ejected from Barking, Suffolk, 1662.

Died 1700.

"To the honourable His Majesty's Justices of the Bench of Common Pleas, sitting at Westminster: The humble petition, etc., humbly sheweth: That our petitioners, being upon the 5th day of July last, peaceably assembled in the public parish church of Walsham (le-Willows), in the county of Suffolk, where, after the liturgy was read by the minister of the parish, a sermon was preached by a non-licensed minister (Mr. Scanderet), who was by your Lordships' justice, last term discharged from his imprisonment, were then and there, during the sermon, taken by some of His Majesty's justices of the peace for the said county and committed to prison, where they remained till the next Quarter Sessions, and, being called to the bar at the said sessions, were released of their imprisonment, upon their recognizance to appear at the next assizes; where, accordingly, your petitioners appearing (though not convicted of any other offence), upon a general suggestion of the said justices (to whom some of your petitioners were altogether strangers and unknown), that they were persons dangerous to the public peace, and were again committed to prison by his lordship, Mr. Justice Raysford, till they could find sureties for their good behaviour; by virtue whereof your petitioners have endured more than five months' close imprisonment, which is like to be perpetuated, unless they are relieved by your lordships' justice. Wherefore your petitioners do most humbly pray that, in consideration of the promises, your lordship would grant your petitioners your writ of *Habeas Corpus* that their persons and cause may be brought before your lordship's cognizance, and, according to the merits thereof, may receive justice of your lordships." Six ministers at least were implicated in this affair; Mr. Scandaret, ejected from Haverhill; Mr. Fairfax, ejected from Barking; Mr. Page, ejected from Honington; Mr. Simpson, ejected from Trimley; Mr. Salkeld, ejected from Worlington, and Mr. Jessup. We learn from the first letter (dated October 5th, 1670), that

"Mr. Page, being an aged, infirm man, was discharged wholly at his first appearance at sessions. Mr. Simpson was committed with us; but there being an indictment found against him by the grand jury, he gave surety to prosecute his traverse next assizes, and to be of good behaviour, so he had his liberty. Mr. Scandaret forfeited his recognizance; but poor man! on Saturday last was met travelling on the road, with his wife behind him, by Sir Edmund Bacon, who apprehended him, and sent him to prison to Ipswich gaole, with whom I fear it will go very ill."

"The three ministers in Bury prison," who were aided by Mr. Meadows at this date, were Mr. Salkeld, Mr. Fairfax, and Mr. Jessup, and we may therefore conclude that they were the

petitioners in this case. Mr. Fairfax continues: "This petition was presented to all the justices of the Common Pleas, by the hand of a friend. When they had read it, some of them advised that a sergeant-at-law might be retained to plead it in court, which occasioned some altercation, and there was much debate concerning us: but in the issue the justices were of opinion that they could not grant an *Habeas Corpus*, and, if they could, they said we could derive very little advantage from it; yet they did so much resent our case that they advised us to petition the King without delay.

"The court was full, but we attempted no further, so that our case is uncertain as to any remedy to be obtained from Westminster Hall; yet God hath not left us without hopes, nor without means of deliverance, for the providence of God hath so ordered it that the judge which committed us at the last assizes rides not the circuit at this next assizes, but the two best, soberest, and most moderate judges are appointed to come, viz., the Lord Chief Baron Hales and Mr. Justice Archer, which last was one of the two that discharged Mr. Scanderet, against the sentence of a cruel judge, viz., Wilde, and against the earnest and importunate complaint of the country justices, which then appeared against him. Besides, we are informed that some friends, without our knowledge, have engaged some person of honour to act for us in order to obtain our discharge, and we apprehend the public fare of things is much altered since we came to prison. The House of Commons are not in haste to make any more laws against the Nonconformists (but are rather making inspection into the Papists), and endeavouring to shield them from danger. "From Scotland we are informed, by good authority, that the severe acts made against the Nonconformists are so far from being put into execution, that the Nonconformists are offered liberty, upon no further terms than to submit to sit in consistory with the bishops, with liberty to express their judgment concerning church government, in word or writing, and that they shall vote in consistory with the bishop, and he to do nothing but by the consent of the Presbyterian (? presbytery). Also in London all things are very quiet; no disturbance at meetings, although some be very numerous and public.

"These things are possible arguments of hope, that at the assizes we may be otherwise treated than we have been, and released from our imprisonment."

The effect of this imprisonment, at first, was to produce a feverish state of body, and faintness, but when he had become quite strong again, he wrote, December 26th, 1670:—

"And for my mind, I bless God a gaole hath not broken my spirit, either as a man or as a Christian; yea, I may say it hath

raised and improved me in both respects. Beyond my expectation, and against my fears and demeritts, God hath not only supported, but encouraged me by His grace; not only upheld me from sinking, but lifted me up to rejoicing. A man may be more scared than hurt by a prison. What, sad, black, fearful, dismal thoughts as ever those who at liberty may conceive of a gaole, the experience which I have hitherto had thereof obligeth and prompts me to bless God in it and for it. My adversaries have not done me the hurt they intended. All the vengeance I shall take of them is to wish them the good I have received. Did they understand well my happiness, to which a wise and gracious God hath turned my imprisonment, my suffering would starve their malice, and be a sifter object for their envy."

John Bunyan, who was at the same time learning the same lessons, has given us his experience in words which will never die:

"Stone walls no not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage.
"For though men keep my outward man
Within their locks and bars,
Yet by the faith of Christ I can
Mount higher than the stars.
"These be the men that God doth count
Of high and noble mind;
These be the men that do surmount
What you in nature find.
"First they do conquer their own hearts
All worldly fears, and then
Also the devil's fiery darts,
And persecuting men."

Whether Mr. Fairfax and his companions in bonds obtained their release at the assizes to which they were looking forward, we do not know, but we find that they had obtained their liberty in 1672, and all three instantly sought and obtained licenses to preach.

"John Salkeld as a Presbyterian teacher at his own house, Walsham-le-Willows; John Fairfax as a Presbyterian teacher at the house of Margaret Rozer, Needham Market; John Jessup as a Presbyterian teacher at his own home, South Lopham."

And now Mr. Fairfax commenced that active course which only terminated with his death. He was nearly fifty years of age, and with the assistance of Mr. Timothy Wright, he ministered to the spiritual necessities of his friends at Needham, and also to those of a congregation at Ipswich. He was a man of great

diligence and great influence in the neighbourhood, and had "a personal knowledge of above eighty" of the ministers ejected in these parts, and he bears this testimony to the character of the whole class, that they were "persons of sufficient ministerial abilities, of great integrity and faithfulness, industriously studying and designing the salvation of souls, and commending religion to their people, by an exemplary practice and conversation, wherein many were eminent, and went beyond others."

Mr. Fairfax was of the "Presbyterian way," and his congregation at Needham was accounted Presbyterian in his time, and in that of his successor. He died at his home at Barking, August 11th, 1700, aged 77.

Mr. Fairfax was succeeded by the Rev. John Meadows, eldest son of the Rev. John Meadows, ejected from Ousden. He was born December 26th, 1676; came to settle with the congregation at Needham, September 21st, 1701, and was ordained August 26th, 1702. He had been placed by his father at Caius College, Cambridge. The living of Witlesham, in this county, was in the gift of his mother; and yet, notwithstanding all inducements to conformity, he cast in his lot with the dissenters.

For fifty-six years he was minister of this congregation; and in prospect of his death, he wrote a pamphlet expressive of his opinions and hopes, from which the following extracts are given:—

"1. I dye in faith as I have lived; believing the Divine authority of the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and in the faith of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in which I have been baptized myself, and have baptized others; and believing in a future state of retribution, rewards, and punishments at the end of this life.

"2. I dye with hope concerning myself in particular; looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus unto eternal life, when this present life shall be at an end, and expecting Christ coming, to change this vile body (which must be laid in the grave), that it may be fashioned like unto his own most glorious body.

"3. Having this hope I dye willingly. . . having had long life, I am satisfied therewith, and am desirous that God would shew me His salvation.

"4. I dye thankfully; praising God for all his mercy bestowed on me, both temporal and spiritual. . . that I have been carried through so many years . . . and that even the days of old age have not been so evil to me as they have to some . . . and that He hath vouchsafed to employ me so long in His service in the work of the ministry. . . and hath, in some measure assisted and succeeded me in it; and because, as I hope, I have in some measure, found grace to be faithful.

Lastly—into They hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit!
 Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, when it shall depart from its
 body. Amen."

The following epitaph, prepared partly by himself, is on a
 marble slab over his tomb:—

Hic quiescit,
 Credens, sperans, spirans,
 per merita D.N.I.C.
 resurrectionen corporis gloriosam
 ad vitain æternam,
 Johannes Meadows,
 favente Deco, sanctissimi minister Evangelii
 et apud Needhamum, parochiæ hujus,
 Christianæ ecclesiæ per 56 annos pastor.
 Carne solutus 10 mo. die Aprilis,
 solutis humanæ A. 1757,
 ætat. suæ 81.
 Sarah his wife,
 daughter of Robert and Sarah Chaplin,
 died December 24th, 1732, aged 57.

In 1755, Mr., afterwards the celebrated Dr. Joseph Priestley, came to Needham, on the recommendation of Dr. Ashworth, of Daventry, to act as the colleague and the successor in prospect, of the venerable minister, then, as he describes, in a state which might fitly be styled one of superannuation. The late Rev. Dr. Henderson, in a note to the charge which he delivered at the ordination of Mr. Davis, says of Mr. Priestley:—

"It was here he nurtured and developed those principles of scepticism and unbelief that had been lodged in his mind by the speculations and debates in which, with his fellow students, he freely indulged, and to which the general plan of their studies very naturally led. Though already an Arian, he still held a qualified belief in the doctrine of the Atonement; but he had not been long at Needham Market, when, as he informs us, he arrived at 'a full persuasion,' that, 'even in its most qualified sense,' it was a doctrine 'which had no countenance either from scripture or reason.' It was here too he discovered that Paul's 'reasoning was in many places far from being conclusive,' and became convinced of 'the falsity of the doctrine of the inspiration of the authors of the books of scripture as writers, and of all idea of supernatural influence, except for the purposes of miracles.' If he found the congregation in a low state when he entered upon his ministry in the place, he soon reduced it lower. He did all he could to gain their affections, and, as he acknowledged to his brother Timothy (a fact the truth of which Mr. Towle Rutt has in vain attempted to invalidate), 'so far hid his cloven hoof'

that he taught an orthodox catechism, yet 'they found him out'; and taking alarm at his sentiments, the congregation, as he states, fell off again, and though the principal or more respectable families continued with him, it was not long before he was obliged to resign his situation, and proceed to Nantwich, in Cheshire, where he preached to a congregation of about sixty persons.

"In a few instances, perhaps, had there been a more striking exhibition of the inefficiency of unsanctified talent, and the unhappy influence of erroneous sentiment, in a professedly Christian teacher than in that to which we refer. Instead of preparing himself fully and faithfully to preach the doctrines of the Gospel, the philosophical instructor was busied with speculative investigations, by which he progressively reasoned himself out of the belief of every article that could supply him with cogent motives of duty, give religious fervour to his spirit, prompt him to directness of effort for the conversion of sinners to God, or enable him to excite and keep up the attention of his congregation. And instead of devoting his time and talents to the instruction of the neighbouring villages—preaching to them on the evenings of the Lord's Day, and on week day evenings, his 'schemes,' as he calls them, 'for promoting the interests of religion in the place' were confined to the catechizing of a few children, and the delivery of 'lectures on the theory of religion from the institutes.' The consequences were, that such as knew and loved the Truth of Christ abandoned his ministry, and in the course of a very short time, the house that had been devoted to the glory of God, and the preaching of the gospel of His Son, was converted into a play-house of the lowest description. It was truly affecting, at the recent ordination, to witness the oldest deacon of the church shedding tears at the remembrance of the time when he was accustomed to frequent those scenes of folly and wickedness which were exhibited within the walls of the chapel after the departure of Mr. Priestley."

Mr. Priestley retired in 1758, and was succeeded by Mr. John Farmer, who never settled as pastor, and continued here but a short time, and then the church speedily dissolved. Mr. Harmer, writing in 1774, says: "Ichabod was written on the walls for more than thirty years."

The Congregational church at present existing in Needham Market was entirely re-originated under the following circumstances. The old meeting house, which was built in 1717, was cleaned and repaired and reopened September 20th, 1793, by the Rev. Mr. Crathern, of Dedham. Neighbouring ministers supplied the pulpit for some time. A congregation was raised, and at length, on August 8th, 1794, the Rev. A. Bromiley was

ordained to the pastoral office, the duties of which he efficiently performed for more than forty years. The Rev. Samuel Davis, of Highbury College, accepted, in 1833, an invitation to become co-pastor with Mr. Bromiley, and on the occasion of his ordination Dr. Henderson said :

"How different is the present state of things at Needham ! The Rev. Arthur Bromiley, after a consistent, honourable, and useful ministry of upwards of forty years at this place, having been compelled, by the infirmities of age, to resign his charge, it has been devolved upon my late pupil and beloved friend, the Rev. Samuel Davis, who has been unanimously chosen as his successor. The chapel is now crowded; and not fewer than three or four preaching stations have been opened in the neighbourhood."

Mr. Bromiley shortly after retired. A special effort was then made to erect a new and more commodious chapel, which was finished in 1838, at a cost of £1,352. Mr. Davis removed in 1841 to Harley Street, Bow, London, and died at Barnet, July 8th, 1865.

The Rev. Edward Bromfield was here some months in 1843, but was succeeded in the same year by the Rev. John Tyndale, who removed to Oxford in 1848. The Rev. Joseph Perkins was ordained July, 1850; he resigned his charge in 1853, and afterwards went to Duxford. In 1853 the Rev. Aaron Duffy, from High Easter, came, but removed to Woodbridge in 1856. He was succeeded in the same year by the Rev. T. J. Kightley, from Bodmin, Cornwall, who removed to Cranbrook in 1858. During these short pastorates the church continued to enjoy both temporal and spiritual prosperity.

In 1859, the Rev. James Jenkins came from Stansfield, and commenced a ministry which continued for twenty-seven years. He did solid and useful work, and many were added to the church. Before he retired in 1886, the schoolroom was enlarged.

The Rev. W. H. Bradford came to Needham Market in 1886. During his ministry the chapel was renovated at a cost of £500, and a hot water apparatus was installed. In 1894 Mr. Bradford resigned, and was succeeded, in the following year, by the Rev. George Cakebread, who came from Haverhill. Mr. Cakebread's ministry was eminently successful, numbers being added to the church. During his pastorate the interior of the chapel was renovated, and the British schools were purchased; the latter now being used for Sunday School work. It ought to be mentioned here that the church owes a great debt of gratitude to the generosity of the late Mr. T. Salmon, who presented the Manse in 1902, and of Mr. D. Quinton, who, for the past fifty years, has been a staunch supporter of the cause.

In December, 1910, Mr. Cakebread resigned, owing to ill-health, and retired to Ipswich, where he died.

In 1911, the Rev. R. N. Davies, of New College, accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate, and was ordained in November of that year. After a fruitful and able ministry of five years, during which numbers of young people were attracted to the church, Mr. Davies resigned in 1916, much to the regret of his congregation, and removed to Slough, Berks. In 1916 the Rev. T. J. Rose, from Hucknell Torkard, entered upon the pastorate, and is the present minister.

HAVERHILL.

HAVERHILL has had a long succession of gospel ministers. John Ward, the honoured father of three honourable sons, was minister here in the latter half of the sixteenth century. We do not exactly know when he first came to this town, but his son, Samuel, afterwards of Ipswich, was born here in the year 1577.

John Ward, the father, was of Christ's College, Cambridge. He first settled at Haverhill, and was also at some period, minister at Bury. He was also at Writtle, in Essex, where he was suspended by the Bishop about 1584, "for not yielding to weare ye surplice." After his suspension he returned to Haverhill, where he died October, 1598.

Laurence Fairclough, a learned and able divine; a solid, eloquent, and useful preacher, finished his ministry here in 1603. He preached a thanksgiving sermon to a very crowded audience, in Haverhill Church, on the accession of King James, and caught a violent cold, which occasioned his death the following day. He was succeeded by John Rogers, M.A., who had been vicar of Huningham, in Norfolk, and removed to Haverhill in 1603. He was a relative of Richard Rogers, of Weathersfield, and a very useful and popular preacher. An account of him is given in Brook's Lives. I. 421.

Samuel Ward was lecturer here at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and a sermon he preached on the Conversion of Zaccheus, was the means of Samuel Fairclough's conversion.

Mr. Wesley, grandfather of John Wesley, who was esteemed a pious evangelical preacher followed, and was succeeded by Mr. Stephen Scanderet, M.A., of both universities, and Conduct of Trinity College, Cambridge. His father was yeoman to the wardrobe of King Charles I. After the Restoration he was ordered to read the service-book in the College chapel, but refused; upon which an unseemly altercation followed, and Mr. Scanderet was removed from his office. He was silenced at Haverhill in 1662, and was afterwards put into the ecclesiastical court charged with preaching for the old minister of the parish, Mr. Eyres (now eighty-five years old), contrary to the Act. The Bishop was informed of this, and said that he had never ordained Mr. Scanderet, and though he had gone through a course of studies, had submitted to the examination of several able divines, and had been solemnly ordained to the ministry (in the Presbyterian way), Dr. King and Sir Gervas Elwes, two magistrates, ordered his *mittimus* to be drawn up; constables

were sent for and ordered to wait, but he escaped out of the room. He afterwards preached in his own house which was in Essex, though his church was in Suffolk, where also the constable lived. Upon this the court excommunicated him, and Mr. Eyres read the excommunication publicly in the church.

He was afterwards sent to Bury jail for preaching at Walsham-le-Willows, and bound him to appear at the next Assizes. He attended, but did not answer when his name was called, and seeing some of his brethren remanded to jail, he withdrew. Sir Edmund Bacon afterwards met him when returning from Norwich, lashed him with his whip, and otherwise maltreated him, and sent him to Ipswich rather than to Bury; that, as he said, "he might break the covey."

He obtained a *Habeas Corpus* for trial at the Common Pleas, where, having declared how he had been dealt with, he was discharged. He afterwards preached at Waterbeach, where he was apprehended, and again escaped. Then he preached at M. Thurlow's house at Cambridge, and was fined £10; and in many other ways he suffered for his nonconformity. He was a man of primitive piety, and good works; zealous both for truth and duty; and of unwearied diligence in his work, both at home and abroad, as long as he lived. In 1672 a petition was presented that he might be a Presbyterian Teacher in "an out-house of Joseph Alders, joining to his dwelling-house at Haverhill"; and the house of Joseph Alders was accordingly licensed. After the Revolution he at first preached alternately at Haverhill and other neighbouring places, but towards the close of his days he resided wholly at Haverhill, and continued in the stated services of that place till his death, December 8th, 1706, aged 75. He lies buried in the chancel at Haverhill.

Thus amidst stress and storm, persecution and suffering, nonconformity struck its roots deep in the soil of Haverhill, and through all the changes of the passing centuries has never failed of stalwart supporters and defenders. The first meeting house was built in 1706 or 7, and was replaced in 1840, by the present handsome Gothic structure, known as "The Old Independent." A succession of strong and able ministers have served the cause in connection with this church. As the history of that church, however, belongs to Essex rather than to Suffolk, space forbids our tracing its fortunes further. It is with the vigorous offshoot of that church, known as Market Hill, or West End, that we are more nearly concerned.

This church was formed on May 16th, 1836, by the Rev. Stephen Gurteen, of Canterbury, and the Rev. Mark Robinson, of Steeple Bumpstead. The Rev. Hugh S. Seaborn, from

Whitstable, was the first pastor. He settled here in 1836, and resigned in 1838, when he went as a missionary to Berbice.

The Rev. Charles Brainsford came in 1838. In September, 1839, the new chapel on Market Hill was opened. Mr. Brainsford resigned on September 29th, 1844, and took up the duties of medical practitioner in the town; he continued to reside here until his death, which took place on August 13th, 1894; his remains were cremated at Woking, and his ashes were interred in Haverhill Cemetery, with the remains of his wife, who passed away in 1870. During Mr. Brainsford's ministry the Sunday School was formed in 1841, Mrs. Brainsford being the first superintendent. Their monument is inscribed as follows:—

Depositum
Sub hoc Tumulo
Corpus
Annæ Coniugis
CAROLI BRAINSFORD, MD.
Quæ Morbo diuturno confecta
Super Pectus
Jesu Christi Salvatoris
Obdormivit
Martn Die XXV Anno MDCCCLXX

In Mundo Morbus,
Metus Manus Mortis;
In Coelo Salus
Soter Sedes Sanctis.
Piæ Recordationi
CAROLI BRAINSFORD, MD.
Qui e Vita Idibus
Sextilibus Excessit
MDCCCXCIV.
Ae tate LXXXVII. Ann.

On Earth is Disease, and Fear
of the Hand of Death;
In Heaven is Salvation, and
Christ the Saviour
The Home of the Blessed.

From October, 1844, to July, 1848, the church was supplied by students from Hackney College.

In July, 1848, the Rev. Henry Gill was called to the pastorate, and was ordained in the September following; he resigned in September, 1863 to take up work for the British and Foreign Bible Society. During his ministry at Haverhill he published

two interesting and instructive volumes, entitled "Early at the Temple," and "The True and Beautiful." After his removal from Haverhill he visited America and Canada on behalf of the Bible Society, and received the degree of D.D. from the Senatus of Kingston University and Victoria University. Upon his return to England he was appointed one of the secretaries of the Bible Society, which office he held till his death in 1870. Mr. Gill married Matilda, daughter of the late Joseph Unwin, of Hazelstubb, Haverhill, who, for some years held the office of People's Churchwarden of the parish, but always attended Market Hill Chapel.

The next minister was the Rev. William Courtnall, who settled here in July, 1866, and resigned in August, 1869, and removed to Wellingborough, to take up the work at Cheese Lane in that town. In 1873 he removed to Wellington, Somerset, and in 1879 he returned to Suffolk, taking up his residence at Sudbury, as a retired minister. For some years Mr. Courtnall acted as secretary to the S.W. district of the Suffolk Congregational Union; was elected chairman of the Union in 1896, and died at Sudbury in 1907, aged 68 years.

Mr. Courtnall was succeeded by the Rev. George Cakebread, of Cheshunt College, who settled here in June, 1870, and resigned in July, 1874, when he went to America to undertake the pastorate of the church at Mount Pleasant, Iowa, where he remained until 1876, when he returned again to England; he was succeeded, in 1875, by the Rev. I. L. Phillips, from Neath, who resigned in September, 1879, when he removed to Malmisbury; thence to Camden Town, London, and ultimately to Australia, where he died in 1895. During Mr. Phillips' ministry a substantial manse was erected.

In 1880 the Rev. Eben Stevens came from Lostwithiel, Cornwall, and remained till October, 1886, when he removed to Seaford, Sussex. During Mr. Stevens' ministry the foundation of a new chapel and schools was laid on a commanding site in the west end of the town.

In March, 1887, after an absence of thirteen years, the Rev. George Cakebread received a pressing invitation to return to his old church, and continued his second pastorate until December, 1895. During this period the present chapel and Sunday Schools were opened, and the old manse was sold, and a new one erected adjoining the chapel, making an imposing block of buildings, with a frontage of over 300 feet, and costing £4,500. In 1895 Mr. Cakebread resigned, having accepted an invitation to Needham Market; he was succeeded by the Rev. Arthur Jarvis, A.T.S., of New College, who entered upon the pastorate

in July, 1896, and resigned in October, 1900, and removed to Winchmore Hill, London.

In 1892 the Rev. T. Salisbury Jones came from Sutton Valence, Kent, and is the present pastor. During Mr. Jones's ministry the debt upon the buildings has been cleared off, and a new two-manual organ has been installed at a cost of £450, towards which Mr. Carnegie contributed £200.

CLARE.

THE Rev. Francis Crowe, M.A., ejected from Hundon, was educated under the famous Du Moulin in France. He was of the family of Hughhead in Scotland. The appointment of his successor at Hundon, September 26th, 1662, is registered thus: *per ejectionem sive amocœm Francisci Crowe, ult. Vicarü et incumb. ibm. vacan.* It is said he had leave to live, some time after his ejection, in the parsonage, till he could provide himself with a convenient house, which he did in the same parish. He removed first to Ovington, where he was licensed as a Presbyterian Teacher in his own house, and where he usually preached twice every Lord's day. At the same time there were also four houses licensed at Clare, and here, too, Mr. Crowe exercised his ministry for many years. Towards the latter end of the reign of Charles II. he was greatly persecuted, so that he could not get an opportunity of preaching without the utmost difficulty. In 1683 he went to Jamaica, where he preached for a time under great discouragements, as appears in a letter given in Calamy's account of him. He returned to England in 1687, refused the offer of a congregation in London, and settled down with his old people at Clare, with whom he continued till his death, in the year 1692, aged 65. Once a month he preached at Bury to a numerous auditory, when he sometimes administered the Sacrament to four tables, because of the great number of communicants.

The Rev. George Porter, B.D., Canon and Proctor of the University of Oxford in the second year of Dr. Owen's vice-chancellorship, was ejected from a fellowship in Magdalen College. He resided some time at Lewes, in Sussex, and afterwards freely preached the gospel at Eastbourne in the same county, near his birthplace. He then succeeded Mr. Crowe at Clare, where he died July, 1697, in the 74th year of his age, and was buried at Ovington. In the Clare Church book there is the following notice:—

“His mortal dust is buried in Ovington Parish Church-yard, in front of the porch; and on the black tombstone is inscribed—‘Here lieth the body of George Porter, A.M., sometime Fellow of Magdalen College, in Oxford, and Senior Proctor there. Afterwards pastor of a Congregation in Clare, who died July, 1697.’ ”

Of this tombstone only a fragment remains.

In church government Mr. Porter has been described as an “Interpendent.” He could not approve that the ruling of

church affairs should be by popular suffrage; or that the people should govern their officers. And yet he held that the people had just rights and privileges which must not in the least be infringed, and that, therefore, the due satisfaction of the church would and ought to be sought by every wise and just governor. In a word he held that it was the pastor's or elder's duty to rule, and the people's part to obey; but both "in the Lord." He left a MS. volume of sermons, designed as a legacy to the church at Clare.

The Rev. William Cook appears to have been the next minister. "He was a man of great ability and learning, and was at the head of the Dissenting interest in those parts many years," but his sun went down under a heavy cloud.

About this time—dates uncertain—the Rev. William Sheldon exercised his ministry here. How long he remained is not known; but he removed from Clare to Farnham, Surrey, in 1723, at the age of 34, and afterwards took charge of the church at Romford, in Essex, where he died in 1763. He was evidently a man of considerable learning, as his library, which he bequeathed to Dr. Williams's Library, in London, testifies. After Mr. Sheldon a Mr. Franks came from Colchester, stayed but a short time, and removed to Edmonton. He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Wilson, who came about 1725, and after ministering five years, went to Maldon, in Essex, about 1730. In his time there was much discussion and division, and the cause suffered greatly. Three ministers followed, under whose influence the church still further declined, when, about the year 1773, the Rev. Thomas Smith afterwards the friend and pastor of the good John Howard, came to Clare with the view of settling, but finding little encouragement, speedily left the place, apparently in a hopeless condition. In 1802 Mr. Hoddy, a Baptist, was invited to become minister, who, after labouring for a time, wished to form a church on strict Baptist principles; this was objected to, and shortly after Mr. Hoddy withdrew with some of his friends, and formed a Baptist Church elsewhere in the town. At Midsummer, 1804, application was made to Hoxton for supplies, and in 1806 the Rev. James Spurgeon was invited to become the minister. A church was formed August 17th, 1806, and Mr. Spurgeon was ordained September 23rd, the same year; he removed to Stambourne in 1810.

The next pastor was the Rev. Thomas Heward, who was ordained October 22nd, 1811, and continued pastor till October 17th, 1824, when he resigned. He was succeeded by Messrs. Ellborough, Merreweather, and Sanderson, who do not appear to be settled pastors of the church, although they laboured for

some years among the people. In May, 1833, the Rev. Thomas K. de Verdon, of Trinity College, Dublin, was invited to the pastorate, and was ordained in the September following. He remained here till September 24th, 1838, and was succeeded by the Rev. S. L. Harris, of Falkenham, near Ipswich, in January, 1840. Mr. Harris was very successful in his labours, and during his time the present chapel was built. He resigned in February, 1851, and emigrated to Australia. The Rev. John Reynolds, from Gloucester, commenced his stated ministry on October 12th, 1851, and resigned in the early part of 1857. In the Church Book there is an interesting minute for this period, to the following effect.—

“In consequence of his engagement to the Committee of the Turkish Mission to become their missionary, Mr. Reynolds tendered his resignation for the purpose of preaching the gospel to the Turks.”

The Rev. Thomas Giles, from Burwell. came in 1857, and laboured very successfully till November, 1861, when he was suddenly removed by death. He was succeeded in 1862, by the Rev. J. Eldrick, M.A., from Kingsbridge, who removed to Monkswearmouth in 1864. The Rev. C. Dukes, from Hackney College, came in June, 1865, but being desirous of missionary work, he went to Madagascar in June, 1866. The Rev. George Seymour, from Steeple Bumpstead, came in 1867, and removed to Rendham in 1872. The Rev. F. C. Skegg, from King's College, came in 1873, and resigned in 1874. He was succeeded in 1875, by the Rev. R. Morgan, from Manningtree, who resigned in 1876. The Rev. J. Wesley Green undertook the pastorate in 1876, and removed to Linton in June, 1879; he was succeeded, in the same year, by the Rev. C. Pyle, who left the following year. In 1882 the Rev. H. G. Fear, of Bristol College, accepted the pastorate. During his ministry a new organ was installed. Mr. Fear removed to Colne, in Lancashire, in 1885. In the following year the Rev. William Wood, who had been trained for the Primitive Methodist Ministry, accepted the pastorate, and exercised a most successful ministry until 1892, when he removed to Ovenden, Yorkshire; he was succeeded in the following year by the Rev. A. A. Savage, who removed to Ingatestone in 1896. The next minister was the Rev. D. L. Thomas, of Brecon College, who entered upon the pastorate in 1879. It was during Mr. Thomas's ministry that the manse was purchased at a cost of £500, and the church became self-supporting. Mr. Thomas resigned in 1903, and removed to West Bromwich. In 1905 the Rev William Brown, formerly in the Wesleyan Methodist Ministry, accepted the invitation to the pastorate, and is still the minister. During

Mr. Brown's energetic and valued ministry the chapel has been renovated at a cost of £500; a new mission-room has been built at Ovington, on land presented by the late Mr. William Gurteen, of Haverhill. In 1906 Mrs. Maria Doggett, a member of an old Clare family, named King, left over £9,000 for the support of the minister at the Congregational Chapel at Clare.

BUNGAY.

IN the year 1658, Mr. Zephaniah Smith was minister here; he had been minister at Wickham Market in succession to John Eaton there. He appears to have been introduced to Bungay "by the special care and prudence" of the Lord Protector, though not without opposition from an adverse party which, on the Protector's death, and emboldened by that event, procured a "malignant minister" to preach in the town, who carried matters with a high hand. A sad state of contention ensued, whereupon an appeal was made to the young Protector, Richard Cromwell, but with what results we do not know. The petition is as follows:—

"The humble petition of several of the Inhabitants of Bungay, in the County of Suffolk, Humbly Sheweth: That your poor petitioners being, by the blessing of God and the especial care and prudence of that never-to-be-forgotten nurse of religion, your Highness's late father, the loss of whom we cannot but sadly lament, settled in the enjoyment of our godly minister. Such hath been the enmity of certain persons, inhabitants of the said town, who, taking encouragement from the death of our gracious governor, your Highness's late father, procured one Harwood, a malignant minister, to preach in the said town, of whom some of our petitioners, to the grief of our hearts, have had sad experience of his teaching; not only to reproach the strict professors of religion, but also in reviling and speaking against the government of these nations under your Highness's late father; and because Mr. Smith, our minister, could not in conscience consent that the said Harwood should preach, and fearing for the future such ministers might be brought in, made our complaint to Colonel Humphrey Brewster, a magistrate adjacent, who, with the desire and consent of many of the inhabitants of the said town, displaced the old sexton, and made one Plumbe sexton in his room. Since which time some of our adversaries, who all along have opposed the settlement of a godly minister, being ffeofees of certain lands given to the said town for pious and charitable uses, have so oppressed and opposed our said minister and your petitioners, in the ways of the Lord, and imprisoned the poor man, our new sexton—for what cause we know not—to the weakening of our hands in the work of the Lord, in the encouraging of profaneness, insomuch as your petitioners cannot enjoy our liberties, nor the preaching of the gospel in peace and safety. Now, so may it please your Highness, that

our good God having opened to us a door of hope under our dark cloud and affliction, raising your Highness to the seat of government, for whom we cannot but be earnest with the Father of mercies, who, to the praise of His grace, hath made us in your Highness to behold a double portion of your late father's spirit, in strengthening the weak hands of those who fear the Lord. Wherefore we have taken this to present our petition for a commission of enquiry.

Zeph. Smith, etc.,

Beccles, Robert Brewster, etc.

Nov. 24, 1658."

Mr. Samuel Malbon was silenced here by the Act of Uniformity. He was "a mighty man in the scriptures," and became pastor of a church in Amsterdam. He published "Eight sermons on Life and Death," prefaced by W. Greenhill, J. Caryl, etc.; but there is nothing known which can connect him with the church and congregation now existing here. It is, however, certain that there were dissenters in Bungay who suffered for keeping up a *Conventicle** and that a society existed here in 1699, having a minister, with a regularly paid stipend of forty pounds a year, whose name was John Biggin. He was a sickly man, but acceptable to his people, and had a good congregation. Till 1700 the congregation worshipped in a barn, but in that year the old meeting-house was built by four persons let to the congregation for £10 per annum; it was, however, made over in 1729 to the Presbyterians or Independents worshipping there for ever. Mr. Biggin, "V.D.M.," died December 30th, 1707, aged 32, and was buried in Trinity Churchyard. He was succeeded by the Rev. Samuel Manning, Jun., under whom the congregation declined. He removed to Walpole, and in 1721 became pastor at Rendham.

About the year 1718 Mr. Henry Robinson, who had previously been a minister in Norfolk, Mr. Harmer supposed at New Buckenham, came to Bungay; and according to his tombstone in Denton churchyard, he continued his ministry here more than fifty years; but though educated for the ministry, and preaching regularly at Bungay, he never was ordained, and continued till his death a private member of the church at Denton. He died January 9th, 1769.

The Rev. David Evans came about Michaelmas, 1769, but continued only one year—he was afterwards at Debenham—and his successor, Ezekiel Offwood, remained only three-quarters of a year. Mr. Robert Shufflebottom came at Midsummer, 1771,

* In 1672, the houses of Thomas Walcott, and John Allen were licensed for Congregational and Anabaptist Meeting places; and the house of Henry Lacey for Baptist worship only.

and after he had preached here about five years a church was formed, and he became its pastor. The record of the inchurching is as follows:—

"May 27th, 1776. After we had mutually confessed our sinfulness both by nature and practice, and declared also our acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ for our Priest, Prophet, and King (Mr. Newton, pastor of the Congregational Church at Norwich, officiating for us), we gave ourselves unto the Lord, and each other for all the purposes of a church state."

Six brethren signed this document, who were probably members of the church at Denton, with which the congregation at Bungay seems from the first to have been connected.

Mr. Shufflebottom was a native of Manchester, educated at Heckmondwike, and was dismissed from the Congregational church at Manchester July 27th, 1776, and admitted into the Bungay church August 7th following. On the 1st of October in that year he was publicly chosen and set apart to the pastoral office, on which occasion Mr. Harmer, of Wattisfield, offered the ordination prayer; Mr. Bocking, of Denton, delivered the charge; and Mr. Newton, of Norwich, preached to the people. He resigned his pastorate in December, 1817, after a useful ministry of forty-six years, and survived till September 23rd, 1829, when he departed at the age of 83.*

The Rev. Henry March, from Homerton, succeeded in the year 1818; he was greatly beloved and respected. He preached his farewell sermon here January 8th, 1826, and removed to Mill Hill, Colchester, and thence to Newbury.

The Rev. John Blackie came to Bungay January 15th, and was ordained here on July 19th, 1826. His venerable predecessor, the Rev. R. Shufflebottom, commenced the service of the day by reading and prayer; the Rev. W. Ward, of Stowmarket, delivered the introductory discourse, and asked the questions; the Revs. A. Ritchie, J. Sloper, T. Morell, of Wymondley College, W. Hull, of Wymondey, E. Hickman, J. B. Innes, R. Drane, and T. Nottage were also present and took part in the service. During Mr. Blackie's ministry the church prospered greatly. He was removed by death in the midst of his usefulness, October 19th, 1840, aged 43 years. Immediately on this event, fourteen neighbouring ministers united in publishing this testimony:—

"He fulfilled the duties of the Christian ministry in a manner eminently becoming the gospel of Christ: we were all acquainted with him, some of us intimately, and from our own knowledge we can confirm the testimony of his mourning

* Evan. Mag., 1829, p. 508.

people, that, in all lowliness, integrity, zeal, and self-denial, he did the work of an evangelist. In public life he was faithful, fervent and energetic, even beyond his strength; in private life he went about doing good."

It was during Mr. Blackie's ministry that Bungay attained a national reputation in the struggle of Nonconformity for religious liberty. In 1833 the Church-rate question was raised in Bungay, and many dissenters refused to pay. "The local authorities of the church took at once high and illegal grounds, and instead of instituting proceedings before the Magistrates, cited a dozen of the most resolute Nonconformists to the Ecclesiastical Court. Amongst these was a Dissenter, whose name will ever be memorable with those who revere unswerving rectitude, and uncompromising principle, the late Mr. John Childs. He declined to influence the other defendants, and in order to leave them free to answer the dictates of their conscience, he forebore to state to them what his own course of action would be. They, however, in the terror which the Court Ecclesiastical excited in their minds, paid the demands of the church's rate-collector. Not so Mr. Childs. He felt in those days the full force of the arguments against the church rates which have since succeeded in sweeping them away, and by his firmness contributed to the emancipation which has come in our day. Surrounded as he naturally was (and as in the early stage of every great reform its champion is) by halterers, staggerers, weak, inconstant, and unfixed minds, he stood up manfully for the Christian convictions which he and others entertained; he refused to regard the Ecclesiastical Courts as having any right or control whatever over himself, and consequently he was committed to Ipswich Gaol—not for refusing to pay clerical rates, but for contempt of the Court. He submitted to severance from his home, and from an affectionate family circle, and to transference to a prison cell at a time when he had recently suffered a grave surgical operation, and when it was believed by his friends impossible that he could survive the infliction of imprisonment. A Committee was generously formed in Ipswich, undertook the management of his affairs, and when they learned at the end of eleven days' imprisonment that he had undergone a most serious attack, indicating at least the possibility of sudden death, they sent a deputation to the Court to pay the rate demanded. The Court required, however, as well as the moneys, the usual oath of canonical obedience, and this Mr. Childs refused to give. He was told by his friends that he would surely die in prison, but his reply was: '*That is not my business.*' By this time nearly every newspaper in the kingdom had published leading articles on the subject, which came to be debated in the House of Commons, and then the

Ecclesiastical Court was glad to forego its oath, probably for the first time, and so gave an order of release. Five years after this new churchwardens having proceeded in an orderly way to distrain the goods of Mr. Charles Childs, each successive year, and being baffled in several attempts to do so, cited him to the Ecclesiastical Court for the sum of 3s. 4d. It took two years and a half to determine whether this sum was due, and that the churchwardens must pay his costs and their own, which in that Court for so long had become considerable. These facts belong to, and are creditable to, the history of dissent in the town of Bungay; unselfish struggles such as these have given us the liberties we enjoy, and a proper consideration of them will help us now to smooth the asperities which, in matters religious as well as civil, combine so frequently to mar the harmony of society, and even to retard the march of human progress.”*

The name of John Childs is associated not only with leadership in the prolonged conflict for the abolition of church rates; he was also a pioneer in the popularising of the standard authors in our language. From his large printing works at Bungay there issued a constant stream of the best books in our literature. In 1826, he projected and commenced the publication of a series of books known in the trade as the “Imperial Edition of Standard Authors,” which for many years maintained an extensive sale, and certainly these met an admitted literary want. In addition to this he attacked and overcame the notorious Bible monopoly of his time. Mr. Ritchie, in his *East Anglia*, says: “Active and fiery in body and soul, Mr. John Childs, with the sympathy and advocacy of Mr. Joseph Hume and other members of Parliament, and aided to a large extent by Lord Brougham, succeeded in procuring the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the existing King’s Printer’s Patent for printing Bibles and Acts of Parliament; the period for the renewal of which was near at hand. The principle upon which the patent was originally granted appeared to be *correctness secured only by protection*—a fallacy which the voluminous evidence of the Committee most completely exposed.” The result of this appeal was that although the patent was renewed for thirty years, instead of sixty years, the Scriptures were sold to the public at a greatly reduced price, and the trade in Bibles, though nominally protected, has ever since been practically free.

“Nor did Mr. Child’s labours end here. In Scotland the right of printing Bibles had been granted exclusively to a company of private persons, Blaire and Bruce, neither of whom had any practical knowledge of the art of printing, or took any interest

* Suffolk Mercury, May 21st, 1870.

in the different editions of the Bible." The errors in these protected editions of God's word, in England and Scotland alike, were numerous and grotesque, and when exposed by competent scholars, brought the whole thing into contempt. And it is to John Childs, of Bungay, that we owe, in a large measure, our cheap Bibles.

On August 12th, 1853, after a short illness, this stalwart Nonconformist and defender of religious liberties, passed to his rest, and was buried in the graveyard of the Congregational Chapel. In the "Norfolk News" of August 20th, 1853, the following appreciation appeared:—

"On the very day the House of Lords delivered its judgment on the Braintree case—a judgment involving the almost immediate extinction of Church rates—Mr. John Childs, of Bungay (who had done more and suffered more than any man of this age in resisting that unjust tax) fulfilled the term usually allotted to man, and died in peace. We have a mournful satisfaction in paying a tribute of sincere respect to this useful and honoured man. Long shall we remember the unbending integrity and honesty of purpose that so peculiarly distinguished every act of his life, and the earnest sympathy which he ever showed for the cause of the people. Henceforth the name of John Childs will stand conspicuous on the list of those Nonconformist worthies who, having served their generation, are gone to their rest."

In July, 1908, a new Congregational Church was opened at Henley-on-Thames. The clock-tower bears the following inscription: "This tower was erected by Sir Frank Crisp, K.B., to the memory of his grandfather, John Childs, a Nonconformist, who in 1836 was imprisoned by the Ecclesiastical Court of the Bishop of Norwich for not contributing to the maintenance of the church at Bungay, in Suffolk," concluding with the following in Latin: "The times are perpetually changing, and we with the times."

In 1841 the Rev. N. Jennings, M.A., of Coward College, entered upon a brief pastorate, which ended in the following year. He was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Clarke, who laboured here four years, and removed to Rotherham. In 1846 the Rev. Gustavus W. Smith, of Coward College came. He was ordained May 31st, of that year, and had a prospect of great usefulness, but his health failed, and he retired to Stroud, his native place, in 1848, to die there. He was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Waddington, late missionary in Berbice, and brother of Dr. Waddington, the famous historian of Congregationalism, who was recognised as pastor April 26th, 1848, and who ministered to the people till 1851, when he removed to

Denton, in Lancashire, in which year the Rev. W. Jackson, son of the Rev. Thomas Jackson, of Stockwell, became pastor. He continued about three years, and was succeeded, in 1854, by the Rev. Charles Wills, B.A., from Colchester; he resigned in 1860, and entered the ministry of the Established Church.

In the autumn of 1860 the Rev. Charles Stokes Carey, from Harwich, accepted an invitation to become the pastor of the church; he laboured here earnestly and faithfully for the space of eleven years. During his ministry harmony and prosperity returned to the sanctuary, and a new schoolroom, capable of holding 500 children, was erected. In October, 1871, Mr. Carey removed to Leytonstone, where he died somewhat suddenly June 8th, 1875. He was succeeded in the pastorate at Bungay by the Rev. Thomas Hope, from the Lancashire Independent College, who was ordained in 1872. Ill health compelled Mr. Hope to resign after a ministry of only eighteen months, when he went to Australia. He was succeeded, in 1874, by the Rev. Stephen St. N. Dobson, B.A., from Dover, who continued till April, 1879. The Rev. Frederick Dash from Hackney College, followed in October of the same year, but was compelled to resign after only a few months of earnest work. He died in October, 1880. The Rev. R. W. Willifer succeeded in July 1881, and resigned in December, 1883. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Stevens, from Great Totham, Essex, who laboured very earnestly and acceptably from October, 1884, till September, 1889, when he went to China. During Mr. Stevens' ministry the church building underwent extensive alterations at a cost of £1,028. The next minister was the Rev. J. G. Watson, from Cheshunt College, who commenced his work here in June, 1890, and ministered with great acceptance to the people till December, 1896, when he accepted an invitation to become assistant to Dr. C. A. Berry, at Wolverhampton. He was followed by the Rev. William Tomalin, A.T.S., from New College, who entered upon the pastorate in February, 1898. In the autumn of the same year the old vestries, with the cottages adjoining, were pulled down, and a spacious Lecture Hall, with minister's and deacons' vestries, was erected, at a cost of £493. In 1900 a larger organ was placed in the church. In 1911 a very fine stained glass window was placed in the Lecture Hall, with the following inscription:—"In memory of John Childs, born August 6th, 1784, died August 12th, 1853. A worshipper in this place, distinguished by his labours and sufferings on behalf of the liberty of God's word."

In 1915 primary school buildings were erected at a cost of £506. After a highly successful and valued ministry, with the happiest relations between pastor and people, and marked by

great spiritual prosperity, Mr. Tomalin was compelled to resign in 1916, owing to a serious nervous breakdown. His was the longest pastorate since that of the Rev. R. Shufflebottom. The Rev. Frank Philip Basden, of Dover succeeded Mr. Tomalin in November, 1916, and is the present pastor.

LONG MELFORD.

THE Rev. John Wood was ejected from Melford, but no records are in existence which connect him directly with this Congregational Church. Several pious persons, not many years after the ejection, are said to have become a separate people, and to have assembled together for religious worship in a barn fitted up for that purpose, and to have been dependent on the ministrations of occasional preachers.

Mr. Tate, the first known pastor, came about the year 1713, and continued his ministrations for about twenty years. It was during Mr. Tate's ministry that the chapel was built. Mr. William Henry Hallum succeeded, who was ordained at Melford, July 18th, 1733; he continued here about eight years, and removed first to Wethersfield, and then to Stambourne, in Essex. Next came the Rev. Samuel Tailer, from Potterspury, in Northamptonshire, who "was a gentleman of considerable ability, but supposed to be somewhat disordered in his head"; he was father of Mr. Tailer, of Stowmarket, and afterwards Carter Lane, London. Mr. Axford was here in August, 1747. He was succeeded by the Rev. James Davidson, of Dedham, who came in 1747 or 1748, and was here about five years; his labours were greatly blessed, but some imprudences caused his removal to Wymondham in 1753. The Rev. Thomas Bocking followed, but was not ordained here; he left some time before 1757, when he succeeded Mr. Julius Saunders at Denton. The Rev. Zechariah Hubbard, son of the Rev. Mr. Hubbard, of Stepney, was the next pastor, who was ordained July 31st, 1759; he resigned in 1793, and died in 1794. The Rev. David Ford, from Homerton, was ordained here in July, 1794; died here April 11th, 1836, aged 72 years, and was succeeded by his son, the Rev. Joseph Ford, from Wymondley, who was ordained July 11th, 1837; he resigned his charge on the death of his mother, June, 1842, and afterwards united himself with the Presbyterian body. He was succeeded in 1842 by the Rev. Henry Hollis, who removed to Ashbourne in 1848. He died suddenly at Ipswich, May 4th, 1871, aged 61. The Rev. John Burgess followed; he was educated at Cheshunt; continued here 19 years, resigned on account of ill-health in 1867, and died at Hammersmith in 1868. The Rev. George Lyon Turner, M.A., from Cheshunt, was ordained October 27th, 1868; he resigned in 1870 to take a tutorial appointment at Hackney College, and was succeeded immediately by the Rev.

F. F. Touzeau, from Hackney College; he remained for ten years, and was succeeded in 1880 by the Rev. P. M. Eastman, from Victoria Road, Northampton, who resigned in 1884, and was succeeded in the following year by the Rev. G. Walker, who resigned in 1894, and was followed by the Rev. J. G. Stevenson, from Hackney College, who was ordained in 1895; in 1898 Mr. Stevenson removed to Newquay, Cornwall, and in the same year the Rev. T. Devine, from Debenham, became minister. During Mr. Devine's ministry the present organ was installed. In 1905 Mr. Devine resigned, having accepted the invitation to St. John's, Ipswich; the Rev. D. B. Morris followed in 1905. During Mr. Morris' pastorate the Bridge Street Mission was reopened, and the church and manse renovated. Mr. Morris resigned in 1917 to take up the work at Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, and was succeeded in the same year by the Rev. S. W. Kitchener, from Alderton, who is the present minister.

HADLEIGH.

“THE towne of Hadleigh was one of the first that received the Word of God in all England, at the preaching of Master Thomas Bilney, by whose industry the gospel of Christ had such gracious successe, and took such roote there, that a great number in that Parish became exceedingly well learned in the Holy Scriptures, as well women as men; so that a man might have found among them many that had often read the whole Bible through, and could have said a great part of Saint Paul’s Epistles by heart, and very well and readily have given a godly learned sentence in any matter of controversie. Their children and servants were also brought up and learned so diligently in the right knowledge of God’s word, that the whole towne seemed rather an universitie of the learned than a towne of cloth-making or labouring people. And that most is to bee commended, they were for the most part faithful followers of God’s word in their living.”* Here, in the first half of the 16th century, the famous Dr. Rowland Taylor exercised his great ministry, and gave up his life in defence of his religious principles. On Aldham Common, near Hadleigh, he suffered martyrdom, February 9th, 1555. In Foxe’s Book of Martyrs there is an interesting account of his trial and death. On the spot where he suffered stands a rough stone obelisk, bearing this old and rude inscription:—

Dr. Tayler
in defending that was good, at this
plas left his blode.

Mr. Harmer informs us that in his day a great deal of uncertainty was felt respecting the origin of the Congregational Church here. The Rev. Isaac Harrison, D.D., was ejected here, but he afterwards conformed. The Rev. Owen Stockton was licensed in 1672 to be a Presbyterian teacher in the house of John Smith, and he was probably the originator of the cause. The people met together in considerable numbers about the year 1688, but had no settled minister till about 1700, when Mr. Thomas Kappit came in that capacity, though he was not ordained to the pastoral office. He continued here about five years and then removed to Harwich. The Rev. John Darby was ordained here September 1st, 1713, and it is supposed that the church was formed, and the original meeting house built, a little before that event. Mr. Darby laboured here until his

*Foxe’s Book of Martyrs. III., 166-7.

death in 1735; and in the following year the Rev. Hugh Mager came, and remained till 1743. In February, 1744, the Rev. Isaacs Toms commenced his ministry, and was ordained July 31st, 1745; he had previously been chaplain in the family of Sir David Dolins at Hackney. He married the only daughter of the Rev. Samuel Say, and left a son in the ministry at Framlingham, the late Rev. Samuel Say Toms. His pastorate was a remarkable one, extending over fifty-seven years. He established religious services in the neighbouring villages, and schools for the children of the poor, and generally, was the instrument in raising this congregation to the honourable position it occupies in the county. He published a little work, entitled "The Shining Convert," being memoirs of an illiterate husbandman, Thomas Seeger, of Kersey, with a sermon occasioned by his death. The dedication "to the congregation, especially the communicants," is dated February 7th, 1746-7. He died January 12th, 1801, aged 91.* Before his death he was assisted by the Rev. William Gunn, who was one of the first students at Hoxton Academy, which he left in 1794 to become pastor of the church at Towcester, where he was ordained October 16th, 1796. In December, 1795, Mr. Toms relinquished his office, and Mr. Gunn removed to Hadleigh in 1800, to become the minister, and on the death of his venerable predecessor was elected pastor, and recognised April 28th, 1802.

"April 28,—the Rev. Mr. Gunn was set apart over the Church of Christ at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, late under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Isaac Toms, to whom Mr. G. had been assistant two years. Mr. Bromley, of Needham Market, began with prayer and reading; Mr. Ray, of Sudbury, preached on the nature and constitution of a gospel church; Mr. Hickman, of Lavenham, prayed; Mr. Crathern, of Dedham, addressed the people from Acts xi., 23; Mr. Price, of Woodbridge concluded. Under the labours of Mr. Gunn, the church and congregation are constantly upon the increase, and it is hoped much good will be done."

Mr. Gunn resigned in April, 1814, and removed to Aylesbury; there he continued till his death, March 17th, 1844, in the 75th year of his age. The Rev. John Hayter Fox, from St. Alban's, was set apart here on October 26th, 1814, and resigned in 1829. He died in 1848, aged 80. On March 3rd, 1830, the Rev. William Froggatt, from Homerton, was ordained, but speedily resigned his charge. The Rev. John Raven, from Highbury, was ordained September 31st, 1831. On November 6th, 1832, the new chapel, with schoolrooms and vestry, was opened, and shortly after, owing to Mr. Raven's successful

* See Memoir in *Evan. Mag.*, 1801.

ministry, was enlarged to seat 1,200 persons. After a useful pastorate of ten years, Mr. Raven removed to Birmingham in 1841. The Rev. Richard Skinner succeeded in 1842, and removed to Huddersfield in 1845. The Rev. James Lyon, from Southwark, came in December, 1845, and resigned August 27th, 1853. The Rev. J. P. Palmer, from Rotherham, came in February, 1854, and removed to Wolverhampton in March, 1861. The Rev. S. Tamaton Williams, son of the famous martyr missionary of Eromanga (John Williams), came from Bocking in 1863, and removed to Hoddeston in 1868. He was succeeded in 1869 by the Rev. R. W. McAll, from Birmingham. On a visit to Paris, Mr. McAll was impressed with the destitute spiritual condition of the people, especially the workmen of that gay city, and resolved to give himself to this new form of missionary work. He resigned his Hadleigh charge in 1871, and took up his abode in Paris, and thus became the founder of the famous McAll Mission.

The Rev. J. Foster Lepine, from New College, succeeded, and was ordained September 19th, 1872, and resigned, after an earnest and useful pastorate, in August, 1886. During Mr. Lepine's ministry, owing to the growing importance of the work carried on by this church in the surrounding villages, it was felt necessary to employ an assistant minister, and in 1873 the Rev. James Belsher, from Lechlade and Bristol Institute, accepted the invitation to this position. He resigned in 1876, having accepted the pastorate of Fetter Lane, London. He was succeeded by the Rev. N. M. Willijer, who resigned in 1881, and was followed by the Rev. T. Hawke, of Silverdale, who resigned in 1882, and removed to Sudbury. In the same year the Rev. J. H. Fry, from Hackney College, accepted the appointment, and remained till 1885, when he removed to Farrington, Berks. The Rev. W. Corney Lee, from Lancashire College, succeeded in 1885, and resigned in the following year. In April, 1887, the Rev. William Friend Durant, of New College, accepted the unanimous invitation of the church to the vacant pastorate, and was ordained July 6th, 1887. For thirteen years Mr. Durant exercised a cultured and useful ministry in this place, winning the confidence and affection of all classes of the community. During Mr. Durant's ministry extensive alterations were carried out in the church buildings. In 1890, a portion of the ceiling having fallen, it was decided to completely renovate the chapel. It was entirely re-seated, a new rostrum replaced the old-fashioned pulpit, new windows in tinted glass were substituted for the old plain glass ones, a richly moulded panel pine ceiling was erected, a hot-air heating apparatus was introduced, and the whole building

thoroughly restored at a cost of £1,200. Mr. Durant had as his assistants the Rev. G. L. Jenkins, of Bristol College, who came in June, 1887, and removed to Castle Headingham in April, 1889; he was succeeded by the Rev. Jasper J. Frewing, of Bristol Institute, who came in July, 1889, and removed to Farringdon in 1893. The Rev. Frank P. Basden, of Western College, came in July, 1893, and resigned July, 1894, having accepted a call to Queen Street, Dover. The Rev. D. L. Thomas, of Brecon College, succeeded in July, 1895, and removed to Clare in January, 1897. The Rev. J. W. Giffin, of Nottingham, came in January, 1898, and resigned in October, 1900, to become assistant to the Rev. H. H. Carlisle, of Lincoln. In 1901, the Rev. T. G. Toy, of Boscombe, accepted the appointment, but resigned soon after. In July, 1901, Mr. Durant resigned, having accepted a call to the church at Portishead, Somerset.

The Rev. Alfred Shave, B.A., of Lancashire College, accepted the pastorate in April, 1902, and was ordained in December of the same year. During Mr. Shave's ministry a strong Brotherhood was formed under his presidency, and a Sisterhood under that of Mrs. Shave. The former held its meetings in the chapel and the latter in a mission room in Benton Street. In August, 1911, much to the regret of a large circle of friends, Mr. Shave resigned, having accepted the pastorate of the church at Frome, Wilts. His assistants at Hadleigh were the Rev. W. H. Warrington, from Nottingham Institute, who settled in June, 1903, and removed to Diss in 1906; the Rev. G. A. Griffith came in 1907, and resigned in August, 1909; he was succeeded in 1909 by the Rev. W. H. Locke, who removed to Epping in 1913.

In October, 1912, the Rev. A. Ewing Cowe, B.A., of Cheshunt College, accepted the call, and was ordained November 27th, 1912. He is the present pastor. His assistants were Mr. G. Sydenham, who came in 1914, and removed to Mundesley in 1918, Mr. J. Preston, who came in 1918, and is still engaged in the work.

No account of this church would be complete without some reference to the extensive mission work carried on in the surrounding villages. This important work began in 1745, under the pastorate of the Rev. Isaac Toms, and has been continued ever since. In some eight or nine villages and hamlets, the pastor and a large band of lay preachers are thus carrying the gospel into districts that would otherwise be largely destitute. Many have been brought into the church through the devoted labours of these faithful servants of Christ. One, among the many who date their conversion to attending these services, is

the Rev. George Cousins, for long years missionary in Madagascar, and ultimately Co-Foreign Secretary with Dr. Wardlaw Thompson, for the London Missionary Society; and among the church records is a farewell letter written by Mr. Cousins on his departure for the Mission field.

MONKS ELEIGH.

Among the old deeds connected with this station is a lease of the property dated 1824, in which a building used as a chapel is exempted from the demise. The earlier history of the cause here is difficult to trace, but as the Rev. Samuel Maille, Rector of Monks Eleigh, was a member of one of the old Classical Presbyteries, and his name appears amongst those of the ejected of 1662, it is more than probable that Nonconformity in this village dates back to this good man's influence. The Methodists and Plymouth Brethren appear to have carried on religious work here for some years, until 1850, when a worthy man, a boot maker, living in Hadleigh, was asked by the community there to take the oversight of the work.

In June, 1863, a conference was called by the Suffolk Union, at Stowmarket, to consider the spiritual condition of the county. At this meeting the needs of the rural districts were specially emphasised. As a result, and in response to a challenge given by the late Mr. Samuel Morley, it was decided to take up evangelistic work in several villages in the county. On the understanding that Monks Eleigh was to be one of the villages thus taken up, the Hadleigh Church guaranteed a contribution of £60 a year for three years towards the cost of the work. As, in spite of repeated appeals from the Hadleigh Church, the Union neglected to undertake the work at Monks Eleigh, the Hadleigh friends, at the close of three years, withdrew their subscription to the Union and employed the money to place an evangelist at Monks Eleigh, and the work here was carried on on these lines till about 1877, when arrangements were made with the Metropolitan Colportage Association to supply a colporteur, who should reside at Monks Eleigh, and carry on his mission in this and the surrounding villages. In 1879, our esteemed and devoted friend, Mr. E. Paine, was sent and is still carrying on his useful work. There is a branch church here of about 50 members. The present chapel, which seats about 300 persons, was opened for public worship in 1870, the old chapel being used as a Sunday School.

Mission work is also carried on in the villages of Aldham, Hintlesham, Kersey, Raydon, Semer, Shelley, Shelley Priory, and Whatfield. For many years the services in these villages

were conducted in private houses, lent by the residents, until Mr. Ansell, the senior deacon of the Hadleigh Church, bought or built the Stations at Monks Eleigh, Aldham, Kersey, Raydon, Shelley, and Whatfield, which he placed in trust for the use of the church by a deed of entrustment, which came into force at his death in 1863. In its care of and provision for the young the Hadleigh Church has been a pioneer. Under the ministry of the Rev. Isaac Toms, somewhere between 1745 and 1795, a Sunday School was established here. So successful was this branch of the work that in 1814 the Rev. J. Hayter Cox, the then pastor, in a supplemental hymn book which he brought out for the use of the congregation, inserted a number of hymns for the children to sing, and in his introduction he refers to the Sunday School as one of the objects which lie near to the heart of the Church of God. The school was held in the vestry of the chapel, which held 150, but overflowing its bounds it occupied also the gallery of the chapel.

At this time the church appears to have engaged two paid teachers (Mr. and Mrs. Albrough), but on their removal from the town, a Mr. Ruffles, a clothier, living in High Street, undertook the office of voluntary superintendent. He gathered around him a number of monitors, each of whom wore, over the left shoulder, a velvet sash lined with silk, as an insignia of office. From that early period down to the present day a strong and prosperous Sunday School has been carried on in connection with this church.

BOXFORD.

ON the 5th of February, 1834, died Robert Ansell, Esq., of Brantham Hall, near Manningtree, in Essex. This gentleman was called to the knowledge of the truth by the labours of an evangelical curate of the Church of England at Boxford, but subsequently became a member of the Congregational Church at Hadleigh. Knowing the destitute condition of the villages around that town, he employed his time and property in establishing Sunday Schools, and in the opening of cottages for preaching or prayer meetings. Mr. A., together with his brother John, of Hadleigh, felt special solicitude for the little town of Boxford, where, the curate having removed, the people were left without evangelical instruction. They therefore erected a commodious chapel with a dwellinghouse for the minister, at the expense

of about £2,000, and placed it in Trust for the sole use of an Independent or Congregational church for ever."†

On the 30th of April, 1823, the first stone of the meeting-house was laid by the Rev. J. H. Cox, of Hadleigh, and the building was opened September 24th in the same year. The Rev. Benjamin Moore, from Hackney, was the first pastor. He was ordained April 7th, 1824, and died April 10th, 1846. The Rev. Edward Brainerd Hickman, of Coward College, son of the Rev. E. Hickman, of Denton, Norfolk, was ordained August 30th, 1846; he removed to Wells, Norfolk, in 1855. The Rev. S. Fisher came in 1855, and removed to Boston, Lincolnshire, in 1867. He was succeeded by the Rev. Albert Smith, from New College, in 1867, who removed to Kelvedon in 1874. In the next year the Rev. William Butcher, from Hundon, accepted the pastorate, and remained till May, 1893, when he retired from the active ministry.

Mr. J. H. Tomlinson, from Rochdale, took the oversight of the church from November, 1893, to November, 1896. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. A. Foster, from Stansfield, who entered upon the pastorate in March, 1898, and resigned in May, 1905, and removed to Stony Stratford. The Rev. J. Butterworth, of Brandeston, was the next minister, and he settled here in October, 1905. During Mr. Butterworth's ministry the chapel was renovated at a cost of £140, and was re-opened free of debt. In 1914, much to the regret of the church, Mr. Butterworth resigned, having accepted a call to Oulton Broad, Lowestoft. He was succeeded, in 1915, by the Rev. George Harding, from Northfleet, who is the present pastor.

† "Within a quarter of a mile of the spot is Groton Place, once the manorial residence of the celebrated family of the Winthrops, who for conscience sake sold their estates, and emigrated to the wild shores of New England. Tradition reports that before these pilgrim fathers left this rural spot for ever, they, with their families and associates, a numerous company, kneeled down in the open field, and committed that village and their country to the blessing of the God of their fathers." *Congl. Mag.*, 1834, p. 187, 8. "John Winthrop sold his English estate, worth £700 a year, and embarked all he possessed to promote the enterprize of liberty and truth. He and his company left England in 1630, and on their arrival in New England he was, by the general voice, elected to be Governor of the Plantation 'founded and formed for the seat of the best reformed Christianity.' The old residence has long ceased to exist. In the Churchyard there is an altar-tomb, close to the wall of the chancel, much defaced by time, in which the remains of Adam Winthrop, the pious father of the Governor, are deposited.

DEBENHAM.

CALAMY informs us that Mr. John King, "a Congregational man," was ejected from Debenham in 1662. He was a man of very tender conscience, studious, thoughtful, profitable in conversation, and instructive in the pulpit.

"He loved to speak of Him whom he loved most, even of his great Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. When he was thrown out of his living he knew not whither to go; but his enemies found a house for him presently, that is a jail. When he was out of that he was forced to take a farm, and mind secular business very diligently, in order to a subsistence. . . . He was cheerful under all, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, and keep a good conscience, than to get plentiful subsistence without them. He died before the year, 1670."

It is supposed that Mr. King preached to a congregation which tradition states "was wont to assemble in private places for religious exercises, and in particular at a farmhouse, about three miles from Debenham, called Brame's Hall."* To this congregation Mr. George Bidbank, a member of the church at Yarmouth, ministered before he was settled at Woodbridge in 1689. There was probably a church here at this time, but there is no record of its formation.

After the passing of the Act of Toleration, Mr., afterwards Dr. Thomas Steward, became the pastor. He was recommended to the church by Mr. Fairfax. He had been educated under Dr. Collinges, at Norwich, and was a man of some culture. He continued here about twelve years, then removed to Dublin, and settled in 1724 at Churchgate Street, Bury, where he died in 1753, aged 84 years.

He was succeeded, in 1706, by the Rev. Kervin Wright, from Soham in Cambridgeshire, a gentleman of very exemplary life and unblemished character, who died suddenly on the 23rd or 24th of December, 1741. He was about seventy years of age, and Mr. Wood, of Woodbridge, says he "was much beloved by his flock, highly esteemed among his brethren in life, and greatly lamented by both at death. He married Sarah, the daughter of John Meadows, ejected from Ousden. It appears from the "Journal" that Mr. Chorley was minister at Debenham in 1739.

* Harmer's MSS. In 1672 James King was licensed to be an Independent Teacher in his own house near Debenham, and in the house of Samuel Burnnet in Debenham. This was probably a son or brother of John King.

It is probable that he was assistant to Mr. Wright some years before that gentleman's death.

The next pastor was the Rev. Thomas Stanton, who came "from one of our academies in 1742."* He was ordained June 8th, 1743. He was a very serious and affectionate preacher, and was highly valued and loved by his people, but a change of sentiment paved the way for his leaving them. He removed to Colchester at Michaelmas, 1754, where, some years afterwards, he received the diploma of D.D. from one of the Universities in Scotland.

The Rev. John Godwin, from Wisbeach, son of the Rev. Mr. Godwin, of Little St. Helen's, London, succeeded. He entered upon the pastoral office here July 19th, 1758, but removed to Guestwick, in Norfolk, about Midsummer, 1760, where he was made very useful, and was much esteemed by many of the neighbouring gentry.*

The Rev. Robert Lewis was ordained pastor here September 1st, 1762. "He was an ingenious young man, but his sentiments did not exactly agree with those of the majority of his congregation." They, nevertheless, gave him an unanimous call to the pastorate; but subsequent dissatisfaction induced him to leave in September, 1764, when he removed to Ipswich.

The Rev. David Evans was ordained August 13th, 1771. He remained here till his death, January 21st, 1788, and was buried in the old meeting-house. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Owen, from Bildeston, who came June 25th, 1788, and was ordained May 6th following. He was a native of Pembrokeshire. He resigned the pastorate in July, 1819, but continued to reside in the town till his death, which took place suddenly January 31st, 1829. He is buried in the chapel ground.

The Rev. George Pearce, from Rotherham College, commenced his ministry July 11th, 1819, and was ordained October 5th following. In 1820 the first stone of the new chapel was laid, and two years after the Rev. William Hurn, the vicar, seceded from the Establishment, and subsequently became pastor of Beaumont Chapel, Woodbridge. Mr. Pearce left Debenham in April, 1836, and went to Ware, Hertfordshire. He died in 1858.

The Rev. Thomas James, from Highbury College, came in April, 1836, and was ordained November 16th following. During his ministry in 1837 the chapel was enlarged. He laboured with great success for thirteen years, and died January 13th, 1850. The tablet erected to his memory states that "The substance of his preaching was Christ Crucified. His manner was earnest and impressive, and his aim was the salvation of souls."

* Harmer's MSS.

The pulpit was occupied after his decease, for short periods, by several ministers. The Rev. James Browne, B.A., was here for a short time, and removed to Ulverstone. In September, 1851, the Rev. William Smith, of Dartford, having supplied the pulpit for one Sunday, was invited to the pastorate on the same day—a most irregular proceeding—which he immediately accepted. The settlement, then hastily entered into, was not a happy one. In the following year difficulties arose between pastor and people, which, for the time, threatened to wreck the cause. Certain charges had been laid against the minister, and a special church meeting was called on February 16th, 1852, to give Mr. Smith an opportunity of hearing and refuting these charges. After hearing his defence, the members present, considering the defence unsatisfactory, asked him to resign his position as pastor of the church within one week, and to give up possession of the manse. Mr. Smith agreed to do this on receipt of the sum of £30; the church agreed to the condition, and Mr. Smith concluded his brief pastorate on Sunday, February 22nd, 1852. From the Church Minute Book it would seem that he commenced preaching in a barn somewhere in Debenham, supported by some members of his old congregation, many of whom were members of the church he had left. How long he continued this preaching place does not appear, but in July of the same year, 1852, several of those who had left were re-instated as members of the church. The next minister was the Rev. Aaron Buzzacot, from New College, London, who settled here in August, 1852, but resigned in the following year, on the ground of physical inability. In October, 1853, the Rev. J. P. Simpson, of Newmarket, was invited to the pastorate for six months, which he accepted. In October, 1854, Mr. Charles Talbot, of Diss, was invited to supply the pulpit for six weeks; and in February of the following year he was invited to the pastorate, which he accepted, and commenced his ministry at once. On Wednesday, April 24th, 1855, Mr. Talbot was ordained. The afternoon meeting was opened by the Rev. Isaac Lord, of Ipswich, at which meeting an address on "The Constitution of a Christian Church" was delivered by the Rev. J. Browning, of Framlingham; the usual questions were asked by the Rev. A. Cuffy, of Needham Market, and the ordination prayer was offered by the Rev. J. Ross, of Woodbridge. At the evening meeting the Rev. J. Lewis, of Diss, conducted the opening exercises, and the charge to the minister and church was given by the Rev. John Raven, of Ipswich.

During the summer of 1866 considerable alterations in the seating accommodation of the chapel, to meet the need of the steadily growing congregation, were carried out at a cost of

£110. In 1869 the present manse and schoolroom were built at a cost of £464. The memorial stone of the schoolroom, called the Lecture Hall, was laid by Col. Sir R. A. S. Adair, on July 30th, 1869. The opening ceremony took place on November 10th of the same year, the Rev. Jonah Reeve, of Stowmarket, preaching the sermon. In the evening of the same day a public meeting was held in the chapel, over which Mr. S. Webb, of Combs, presided, the speakers being the Revs. J. Reeve, of Stowmarket; T. M. Morris, of Ipswich; C. Talbot, the pastor, and Mr. E. Grimwade, of Ipswich.

In February, 1871, Mr. Talbot, through failing health, felt compelled to place his resignation in the hands of the church. The church, however, refused to accept it, and suggested that he should take three months' holiday; to this Mr. Talbot agreed, and the church presented him with £32 12s., which enabled him to spend fourteen weeks in the Isle of Man. He returned to his work much strengthened by his protracted rest, and continued his ministry until 1876, when he resigned, having accepted a call to Woburn, Bucks, preaching his farewell sermon on November 5th. His ministry at Debenham had been remarkably successful, gathering large congregations, and adding many to the membership of the church.

The Rev. Abraham Jackson, from Halesworth, succeeded. He entered upon the pastorate in April, 1877; his recognition service being held in May of that year. Mr. Jackson's ministry was of brief duration, his health giving way soon after his settlement. He preached his last sermon, in feeble health, in October, 1878. A long and painful illness followed, and he passed to his rest May 19th, 1881, and was buried in the chapel burial ground. The Rev. Jonah Reeve, of Stowmarket, preached his funeral sermon on the following Sunday. Though his ministry was short, he endeared himself to the people by his kind and persuasive ministry. A tablet to his memory was erected in the chapel. The Rev. J. Connell succeeded in September, 1881, and resigned in October of the following year. The Rev. J. G. Murray, from Nottingham Institute, entered upon the pastorate in January, 1883, and removed to Marsden, Yorkshire, in 1887.

The Rev. Theophilus Devine, from Bristol College, commenced his ministry here in September, 1888, and was ordained in the following year. At this service the Rev. T. Wickham Tozer, of Ipswich, Chairman of the Suffolk Union, asked the usual questions, the Rev. Luther Caws, of Stowmarket, offered the ordination prayer. The charge to the minister was given by the Rev. Alexander Wilson, B.A., of Bristol, and the charge to the church by the Rev. Principal Allen, of Bristol College. For eleven years Mr. Devine maintained a happy and successful ministry,

winning the confidence and affection of his people, and building up a strong and progressive church. During his pastorate extensive alterations were made in the seating accommodation of the chapel; the entire area being rebenched, and the building renovated at a cost of £427, all of which was raised within two years of the work being completed. A thanksgiving meeting was held in July, 1897, to celebrate the extinction of the debt, when Mr. H. W. Raffe, of Ipswich, presided, and congratulatory addresses were delivered by the Revs. T. W. Tozer, J. Saunders, B.A., T. J. Hosken, A. A. Dowsett, of Ipswich; G. Cakebread, of Needham Market, and J. Stewart, of Felixstowe.

Mr Devine resigned in October, 1898, having accepted a call to Long Melford. On April 26th, 1899, the church invited the Rev. W. Batcock, of Caledonian Road, London, to the pastorate, which he accepted, and entered upon his work on June 25th of that year. This proved anything but a happy settlement. For a time the work proceeded satisfactorily, but soon difficulties arose which led to strained relations between pastor and people. Owing to the peculiar wording of the Trust Deed, the pastor discovered that upon the reduction of Trustees to a certain number he had absolute control of the property, and was master of the situation. Refusing to sanction the appointment of new trustees, or to accept the decision of the church meeting, things went from bad to worse. Deputations were appointed by the Executive Committee of the County Union, to meet pastor and people, and so to attempt a reconciliation, but in vain; the pastor remained obdurate and the cause became practically extinct. In 1913, after various attempts, Mr. Batcock was induced to resign. He removed to Wickham Bishops, Essex, where he passed away on October 18th, 1915, aged 81. After Mr. Batcock's retirement the County Union undertook the resuscitation of the cause, and for a year supplied the pulpit with lay preachers from Ipswich and the district. The earnest and loving service which these brethren so willingly and voluntarily rendered soon bore fruit in a new spirit of hopefulness among the remnant who remained faithful. At the end of that period the success of the work seemed to justify the appointment of a regular pastor, but the difficulty as to the man faced the County Executive. With such a record and a depleted cause, it needed a man of heroic faith and unbounded enthusiasm to face this task. After long and anxious consultations, the Committee succeeded in inducing the Rev. Daniel Clayton, of Sudbury, to undertake the work. Mr. Clayton entered upon the work in September, 1914, and the appointment has fully justified the action of the Executive. In the County Union Report on 1915 the following note occurs:—

"The cause at Debenham has considerably exercised the thought of your Committee during the year. Remembering

what the church had been in past years, and the possibilities lying before it under a capable and judicious ministry, long and earnest attention has been given to this station, your secretary and others paying frequent visits to consult with the friends on the spot. In the good providence of God a happy solution has at length been reached. The Rev. Daniel Clayton, of Trinity church, Sudbury, made the heroic offer to take up this cause. In December, 1914, interesting meetings were held in connexion with Mr. Clayton's settlement. In the afternoon the Rev. J. E. Flower, M.A., of London, preached to a large congregation. In the evening a communion service was held, presided over by the Rev. T. J. Hosken, of Ipswich, at which 34 persons were received into the church, to whom Mr. Hosken extended the right hand of fellowship. This was followed by a public meeting, which was largely attended, and over which Mr. H. Fairfax Harwood, of Ipswich, presided; addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. E. Flower, J. Gleeson, and others. Debenham, we are rejoiced to say, is full of promise."

In November, 1919, after five years of strenuous work, Mr. Clayton resigned, having accepted a call to Southwold. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. D. Hayward, from Alderton.

EAST BERGHOLT.

The earliest records of this church and the account of the circumstances connected with its origin are lost. The place was the resort of three ejected ministers, Richard Moore, Samuel Back(ed)er, and Samuel Foane. Concerning these three stalwarts, the following notes, culled from various sources, will be interesting:—

Richard Moore, M.A., was ejected from Diss, Norfolk. His successor was appointed November 22nd, 1662, per incapacitatem, amocem sive dipriva, Richdi Moore ult incumbent. Samuel Backler, M.A., ejected from Whatfield; "a popular and useful man, who preached frequently in churches after his Nonconformity, and was connived at, but never took anything for his labours after he was ejected." His church was vacant February 9th, 1662-3, per incapacitatem Samuelis Baker (sic) ultimi incumbentis ib'm, virtute Actus Parliamenti pro uniformitate, etc. He died at Dedham, January 18th, 1687, and was buried at Whatfield; Mr. J. Fairfax preached his funeral sermon on 2 Sam., xxiii., 5. He was licensed in 1672 to preach also at Manningtree. Samuel Foane appears to be the minister who was ejected from Woodbury chapel, in Devonshire, of whom Palmer says: "After his ejectment he left this county (Devonshire). He had the character of a very good man, and was universally beloved by his parishioners. There was a general weeping when he preached his farewell sermon." It is curious that the next name to Mr. Foane's in Devonshire, is Henry Backaller; was he related to Sam. Backler above? Noncon-Memorial; Epis. Records; License Book, etc.

Two of these men, Richard Moore and Samuel Backler, were licensed in 1672 to be Presbyterian teachers, and the house of Robert Hall was licensed for Presbyterian worship here. Mr. Foane, who resided here, was licensed to be a general Presbyterian teacher. In 1689, the Rev. John (or Samuel) Brinley was the minister, and probably the pastor of the church, and it was then called Presbyterian. Before the year 1703, the Rev. John Foxon, afterwards of Gilders Hall, London, is said to have exercised his ministry here; but the Rev. Rice Williams is the first pastor of whom there is any certain account; he settled here in 1703, and his ministry extended till 1750, when he died. In the early part of that ministry the congregation was considerable, but the formation of the neighbouring congregation at Dedham, Essex, in 1738, was a great means of reducing the numbers which

attended at Bergholt. The principal reason for the formation of the Dedham congregation was that the Stour separated the people from Bergholt, and as the river frequently overflowed the lowlands, they found it inconvenient to cross. The Rev. Nicholas Humphrey, from Coggeshall, succeeded, and had fair prospects of usefulness, but mental disease, the result of fever, incapacitated him, and he was laid aside in 1755, after labouring here five years. He was succeeded in 1757 by the Rev. Henry Jones, a Scotch minister, who was ordained in June, 1758, and died in 1769 or 70. In 1775 the Rev. Henry Llewelyn became pastor, who afterwards removed to Harleston, where he was ordained in 1786. In 1784 the Rev. Samuel Braybrook, and in 1804, the Rev. J. Harding, are named as ministers here; and in 1807 the Rev. J. F. Covah. This was probably the gentleman (the Rev. J. F. Covah) who was set apart, May 2nd, 1815, over the church and congregation in Chandler Street, Grosvenor Square, London. The Rev. Alexander Good, from Homerton, came in 1813; he was afterwards at Woodbridge. In 1819 the Rev. Thomas Muscutt came from Hackney; he afterwards removed to Lower Rotherhithe, London; he was succeeded by the Rev. John Bromiley, who resigned in 1839. After him the Rev. J. C. Fairfax was pastor, who removed to Swanage in 1847. In 1848 the Rev. E. J. Newton came, and resigned in 1855, and removed to Steeple Bumpstead. The Rev. Robert Roberts came from Chipping in 1855, and resigned in 1869. During Mr. Roberts' ministry the present chapel and school were built. These were opened for public worship in 1859. In 1870 the Rev. G. H. White came from Burwell, and removed in 1877 to Sudbury; he was succeeded in 1878 by the Rev. R. E. Rose, who came from Wickham Market, and remained here till 1889, when he removed to Devonshire. In March, 1890, the Rev. C. G. Stanley came from Cratfield and is still the pastor. Mr. Stanley has taken an active part in all the public life of the neighbourhood, and is respected and trusted by all who know him.

FALKENHAM.

THE chapel here was erected in 1836 at the sole expense of the late Thomas Dains, Esq., and presently enlarged.

A church was formed by six persons by the Rev. William Notcutt, of Ipswich, on September 6th, 1836. The Rev. G. L. Harris was ordained the first pastor, July 25th, 1837; he removed to Clare in January, 1840. The Rev. H. H. Scullard, from Beccles, was ordained July 22nd, 1841; he resigned in 1846. In December, 1847, the Rev. M. Slater, from Fordham, came, and removed to Stonehouse in 1853. The Rev. J. J. Williams commenced his ministry in July, and was ordained August 4th, 1854. In 1861, the old chapel was taken down and a more substantial structure erected. Mr. Williams removed to Nayland in 1864. The Rev. J. Billington came in 1865, and removed in 1868, in which year the Rev. W. Novello came from Cavendish, and removed to Putney in 1875. He was immediately succeeded by the Rev. J. Collyer, from Spilsby, who remained till 1884. For two years the church remained without a pastor. In November, 1886, the Rev. H. Catlow came from Stowmarket, and is the present pastor, having held the position for more than thirty years. In 1903 the chapel underwent a complete renovation, the old uncomfortable pews being replaced by pitch pine benches. Miss Dains, daughter of the founder, and for many years the principal supporter of this church, passed away in February, 1913; she left large bequests to the church and district. One of her special bequests was for the building of a new manse, which was erected in the following year. She also left a sum of money for the building and endowment of six almshouses for the four parishes of Falkenham, Kirton, and the two Trimleys. In addition to these she left her beautiful residence, Trimley House, as a "Home of Rest" for Christian workers. This has proved a veritable boon to scores of ministers and others from all parts of the country. The Rev. A. A. Dowsett is the warden.

ALDERTON.

THE Rev. Samuel Harris laboured in this village for two years and a-half under the auspices of the Home Missionary Society, during which time the chapel was built: it was opened November 29th, 1836, and Mr. Harris was ordained; he resigned in 1840, and the Rev. J. C. Folley succeeded. On July 1st, 1842, an invitation, signed by seventy-seven members, was given to the Rev. Thomas Hill to be their pastor, which he accepted, and was ordained June 6th, 1843, and continued here till 1848, when the Rev. T. Walford, from Cotton End, succeeded; he removed to Laver Breton in 1857. The Rev. C. F. Warr commenced his labours January 3rd, 1858, and on the 27th of November, the same year, after three days' illness, died. The Rev. G. C. Smith, from Brampton, came March 26th, 1860, and afterwards removed to Folkestone. The Rev. George Lock, from Knowle, succeeded in April, 1860, resigned July, 1865, and removed to Cleckheaton. The Rev. Samuel Giblett came in 1865, and removed to Morecambe Lake in 1870. The Rev. William Fox, from Brandeston, came in 1870, and removed in 1875 to Cockfield. Mr. W. Wilkinson, from Trowse, Norwich, followed, and remained here till 1878, when he accepted a call to Derwent Street Church, Derby. In 1879, the Rev. G. C. Martin was called to the pastorate, and continued till 1888, when he removed to Lowestoft to undertake the oversight of the missions at Pakefield and Carlton Colville; he was succeeded by the Rev. R. C. Paynter, who came in May, 1888, and resigned in December, 1891; he was immediately succeeded by the Rev. Henry Henson, from Woodbridge, who continued here till December, 1898, when he removed to Totton, Hants; he was succeeded by the Rev. H. T. Carr, who came from Stratford, Ontario, Canada, in 1899, and resigned in 1901.

For some time the cause at Alderton had been a matter of grave concern to the Executive of the County Union, and in January, 1902, the Union placed it under the superintendence of the Rev. John Stewart, of Felixstowe, who placed Mr. Leonard Hills, of London, as evangelist. During Mr. Hills' ministry services were commenced at Ramsholt and Shottisham. Mr. Hills resigned in 1904. About this time a painter of some note, Mr. Wallace Cadman, visited the district and attended services at the chapel, and to commemorate his visit he painted and presented to the chapel a large picture, representing Our

Lord, which now hangs over the pulpit. In 1905 the chapel and manse were renovated and a new schoolroom built. In that year Mr. S. T. Cooke was appointed evangelist; he remained here till 1910, when he removed to America. For a few months the Rev. P. M. Eastman, of Hadleigh, assumed pastoral oversight. In the meantime Mr. Stewart, having removed from Felixstowe, his successor, the Rev. F. T. Astbury, undertook the superintendence, and on March 11th, 1910, Mr. S. W. Kitchener, of Walsham-le-Willows and Botesdale, was appointed evangelist. In 1914 the chapel underwent extensive alterations, and was re-benched throughout at a cost of £140. Mr. Kitchener having successfully passed the examination set by the Congregational Union, was ordained in September, 1916. Early in the following year he accepted a call to Long Melford; he was succeeded in November, 1917, by the Rev. W. D. Hayward, of Watton, in Norfolk, who removed in 1919 to Debenham. The pastorate is now vacant.

LAVENHAM.

The Rev. William Gurnall, author of "The Christian in Complete Armour," was the Puritan minister of this parish;* he conformed in 1662 and continued his ministrations here till his death in 1679. His evangelical preaching no doubt prepared the minds of many persons to embrace the doctrines and practices of Nonconformity after his decease.

There was a Baptist Society here, meeting at the lower end of Water Street, in 1692, of which Mr. Tredwell, from London, was pastor, which subsequently became extinct. In the year 1697, five years after a certain controversy between the Baptist minister and the Rev. William Burkitt, of Milden, the meeting house recently vacated, which was then a barn, was fitted up for public worship, and a church was formed here by the Rev. Thomas Hall† who, after labouring several years, was ordained April 12th, 1715. He continued here till 1719, when he removed to The Pavement, Moorfields, London. Mr. Harmer gives the following account, which, he said he perfectly well remembered hearing Mr. Hall relate, concerning the first formation of this church: "It being thought proper to bring the good people of the assembly there into church fellowship, Mr. Hall desired three or four of the most serious and prudent people among them, separately and without communicating their thoughts to each other, to draw up lists of such persons as they thought proper to become church members. These lists all proved alike; . . . after this, on an appointed day observed with great solemnity and much prayer, those persons

* The order of the House of Commons for his admission to the rectory is as follows:—"Decimo sexto, Decembris, 1644. Whereas the church at Lavenham, in the County of Suffolk, is lately become voyd by the decease of Ambrose Copinger, Doctor of Divinity, and that Sir Edmund D'Ewes, Patron of the said church, hath conferred the Advowson of the same upon William Gurnall, Master of Arts, a learned, godly, and orthodox divine. It is ordered by the house of Commons that the said William Gurnall shall be and contynue Rector and Incumbent of the same church for and during the terme of his naturall life, and shall have, receive, and enjoy all such tithes and other profits as other Rector and Incumbents of the same church before him have had, received, and enjoyed. Provided that the said William Gurnall doe pay upon this avoydance, all such first fruits and tenths unto his matie as by the lawes of the Realme are and shall be due from tyme to tyme.

"H. Elsing, Cler. par. D. Coms."

† It appears from an entry in the Bury Church Book that Mr. Milway was here probably before Mr. Hall: "November 18th, 1716. Mr. Joshua Lambert, related that the preaching of Mr. Tredwell, then at La'nham, when he was very young, made impression upon him, . . . that Mr. Milway's ministry at La'nham was afterwards blessed to him."

confederated together as a Church of Christ." His only regret, in reviewing the transaction was "the not applying to neighbouring churches and elders to engage them to a concurrence with, and attendance on, the transaction."†

Mr. Hall was succeeded by the Rev. Samuel Wood, from Wivenhoe, who remained here about fourteen years, during which he educated young men, some of them for the ministry. About 1734 he removed to Bishop Stortford, from whence he removed to Woodbridge, where he died. The next pastor was the Rev. Stephen Maling, from Hertford, who came in 1736, but was not ordained till August, 1747; he continued till his death in 1765, after which the church was involved in very considerable difficulties. The Rev. Henry Darby was invited to the pastorate in 1771, but he left the following year. Between 1774 and 1782, the ministers were Mr. Duncan and Mr. Jones; in the latter year the Rev. William Hickman became pastor, who removed to Wattisfield in 1795; he was succeeded in the following year by the Rev. Thomas Hickman, formerly of Bildeston, who removed in 1825. He died in 1844, aged 89. In 1826 the Rev. Robert Ainslie came, and continued till 1834, when he removed to New Court, Carey Street, London; he afterwards left the denomination. The present chapel was built during his ministry in 1827; he wrote a memoir of Gurnall in the Congregational Magazine, which contains some notices of the church, which, however, are not quite correct. The Rev. John Mellis came in 1835, and removed to Hallerton in 1850. In 1851 the Rev. Henry Davies came, and for twenty-six years held the pastorate. He died in the year 1877, much regretted by all who knew him. A tablet was erected to his memory in the church. He was followed by the Rev. W. D. Attack, from Hockliffe, who resigned in 1882. The next minister was the Rev. John Brockis, who came from Nottingham, and, like Mr. Davies, he held the pastorate for twenty-six years, winning the confidence and respect, not only of the members of his church, but of all who were brought into contact with him. During his ministry the chapel, school, and manse were enfranchised. Mr. Brockis passed to his rest in 1908, and to commemorate his long and valued ministry a handsome tablet was erected in the church. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. J. Chappell, who came from Stansfield in 1910, and resigned in 1913; he was succeeded by the Rev. W. E. J. Seabrooke, who came from Newcastle in 1915; he resigned in April, 1918, and removed to Burnley, Lancashire.

† MSS.

NAYLAND.

THE house of William Spring, in Nayland, was licensed in 1672 for Nonconformist worship, but the earliest intimation of the existence of a church here is the licence for the old meeting house, granted January 19th, 1690, before which date there was preaching now and then in a barn. The first settled pastor was the Rev. Samuel Porter who came shortly after the licence above, and continued here till his death, August 16th, 1706, aged 47 years. He was buried in the chancel of the Parish Church, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Bury, of Bury St. Edmund's. The church was considered to be of the Presbyterian denomination.

The second pastor was the Rev. Henry Hurst, son of the Rev. Henry Hurst, M.A., who was ejected from St. Matthew's, Friday Street, London. He married a niece of Sir Richard Blackmore, came to Nayland about 1707, and died of a cancerous affection of the mouth and throat, about Michaelmas, 1723, at the age of 44. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Wood, of Lavenham. The church book commences in the year 1708. The third pastor was the Rev. Mr. Jones, a Welshman, who preached some months, but was not approved; who afterwards conformed but could get no preferment. He was succeeded by Mr. J. Watkins, who came about 1732, and continued till the latter part of 1737, when he removed to Rochester, and then to Lewes. Early in 1738 the Rev. Bazaleel Blomfield came from Colchester. He was ordained October 4th of that year, about which time some alterations were made in the constitution of the church, more nearly assimilating it to the Congregational model. Mr. Blomfield married one of the Grimstone family, illustrious in the seventeenth century, Sir Harbottle Grimstone being one of the members for Colchester in the Parliament of 1639-40; he died here June 14th, 1780, and his funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. John Saunders, of Hertford. The next minister was the Rev. James Brown, who came in 1782. He was succeeded in 1788 by the Rev. William Northend, from Welford, who resigned in 1792 or 3, and died in 1821, aged 75. In 1793 the Rev. James Waddell came; he was ordained pastor in 1795, and resigned in 1811. For two years the pulpit was supplied by students from Homerton College. Up to this period the Sunday School had been conducted by paid teachers, but now an unpaid staff was appointed. A day school for girls and an evening school for boys were established in connection with this church in the early years of the century. In 1814, the Rev. Edward Smith accepted the pastorate, and was ordained on December 15th, 1815; he resigned in 1836, in which year the Rev. John Johnston came, who resigned in 1847. He was succeeded, in the same year, by the Rev. H. J. Haas,

who removed to Crediton in 1854. The Rev. Marcus Hopwood, from Harwich, came in 1855, and removed to Ashburton in 1857. The Rev. G. Ward, a Baptist, came in 1857, and removed to Walton in 1863. The Rev. J. J. Williams came from Falkenham in 1864, and remained there several years. During this period the old chapel and manse were taken down, and a new chapel, in the early Gothic style, was erected on the old site, at a cost of £1,200. It has a seating accommodation for 300 persons, in addition to a good school-room and class-rooms. The opening services were held on November 16th, 1864, the Revs. Dr. Stoughton and John Fleming being the preachers. A commodious house in the village was also purchased for a manse. Mr. Williams removed to Greenacres in 1867, and was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas K. de Verdon, from Leytonstone. During this pastorate the chapel was licensed for the solemnization of marriages, the first taking place on July 22nd, 1869. Mr. Verdon resigned in 1872. For a considerable time the pastorate remained vacant. On December 27th, 1874, the Rev. J. Price, from Upway, came, and resigned in September, 1878; he was succeeded, in 1879, by the Rev. J. H. Guy, who remained till 1886, when ill-health compelled him to resign. He died shortly afterwards from cancer.

The next minister was the Rev. G. Bawn, who came from Cockfield in 1886, and resigned in 1889 on account of ill-health. Mr. Bawn went out to South Africa, where he held several pastorates until 1895, when he returned to England, and again took up the work in the homeland. The Rev. J. Colclough, from Ireland, came in November, 1889, and resigned in April, 1891, when he went to Canada to take charge of the church in Ontario. During Mr. Colclough's ministry the Bi-centenary of the church was celebrated in an interesting series of meetings. On October 4th, 1891, the Rev. C. E. Sawdy, who had been assistant to the Rev. John Hart, of Guilford, entered upon the pastorate here, and still continues in that office. During Mr. Sawdy's ministry a mission has been established in the adjoining village of Stoke-by-Nayland, where for two or three years the church rented a cottage, and held services regularly on Sundays and during the week. The congregations becoming too large for the cottage accommodation, Mr. S. T. Harwood, of Battisford Hall, Needham Market, erected a neat mission chapel seating 120 persons, which he let to the Nayland Church at a nominal rent. This chapel was opened on Sunday, May 26th, 1901, the Rev. E. C. Sawdy conducting the service. In October, 1912, Mr. Sawdy celebrated his twenty-first anniversary as pastor of the church, when he was presented with a purse of gold and a handsomely bound pocket Bible, suitably inscribed.

LOWESTOFT.

THE Rev. William Bridge, writing August 16th, 1655, to a person in London, says:—

"Six miles from us (Yarmouth) there is a market town; and the only great town in the island (Lothingland); the living is not worth £40 a year. If £50 may be laid upon it, and a good man put into the place, it would be very influential upon the whole island. The gift of the living belongs to the Lord Protector. The town hath been malignant, called Laystoffe, known to his Highness, being part of the firstfruits of his great labours. Much service might be done for Christ in settling this place; and if the Lord will give your hearts to pity this great town, many souls will bless God for your bowels."

Mr. Bridge's reference to the town being "malignant" may be explained by the fact that at the commencement of the Civil War, Lowestoft espoused the Royalist side. In 1642 the Eastern Counties entered into an association to support the Parliament. Cromwell, hearing that several gentlemen of eminent rank were assembled at Lowestoft to form a counter association, marched to Lowestoft and surprised them. The parish register states that on "March 14th, 1643, Col. Cromwell, with a brigade of horse, and certain foot, which he had from Yarmouth, came to this town, and from thence carried away prisoners Sir Edward Barker and his brother, Sir John Pettus, Mr. Knight (Knevet), of Ashwellthorpe, Mr. Catline, Capt. Hammond, Mr. Thomas Cory, with others, to Cambridge, and with these myself (Rev. Jacob Rous, vicar), Mr. Thomas Allen (afterwards Admiral Allen), Mr. Simon Canham and Thomas Canham, of this town." He further says: "For some time following there was neither minister nor clerk in this town; but the inhabitants were obliged to procure one another to baptize their children, by which means there was no register kept; only a few were by myself baptized in those intervals when I enjoyed my freedom. Jacob Rous."

From Bridge's letter we gather that the living must have been vacant in August, 1655, but we do not know of any one being sent here during the Protectorate period. Gillingwater, in his history of the town, says of the Congregational Dissenters:—

"At what time it was that this religious sect first began to make its appearance in Lowestoft is now uncertain; all that I am able to ascertain respecting it at this present time (1790) is that previous to the year 1689, when the learned Mr. Emlyn came to reside in this town, and commenced being officiating minister to this congregation, it was an inconsiderable body,



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*From a fine portrait in the vestry of the Yarmouth Church,
 kindly lent by the deacons.*

destitute of a regular pastor, and also of a decent structure for the performance of religious exercises.

"The congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Lowestoft might be considered also, as a kind of dependent assembly on the Dissenting congregation at Yarmouth; as it was customary for the members belonging to the former congregation to repair to that at Yarmouth at the usual seasons of receiving the Holy Communion, and was in much the same state of dependence on that society as a chapel of ease is on the Mother Church."

This congregation originally met in a barn, which was situated in Blue Anchor Lane, but in the year 1695 the chapel was built for its use in the High Street, which was afterwards made over to the Wesleyan Reformers, and has since been removed for town improvements. But before the date which Gillingwater mentions, we find that in 1672, the house of William Rising was licensed "for such as are lycensed men to preach in." We cannot say who they were, but Edwin Plough, who appears to have been connected with the Beccles church, was licensed to preach in Kessingland and Gisleham, and he probably with others engaged in the work here. The name of the Rev. Mr. Manning is mentioned as having been an occasional preacher here before the Revolution. This was unquestionably the Rev. Wm. Manning who was ejected from Middleton, and we find that he was a "lycensed man," and a Congregational teacher in his own house at Peasenhall. "He was a man of great ability and learning; but he fell into Socinian principles, to which he adhered to his death." He and Mr. Emlyn contracted a close and intimate friendship. They conferred together upon the highest mysteries of religion. Dr. Sherlock's book upon the Trinity became a stumbling block to both. Mr. Manning became a Socinian, but could not persuade Mr. Emlyn to go so far.

In 1688, the disturbances in Ireland occasioned Mr. Thomas Emlyn's removal to England; he was invited to the house of Sir Robert Rich, at Rose Hall, Beccles, and was by him prevailed upon to officiate as minister to a dissenting congregation in this place; he continued here for a year and a half, but refused the invitation to become the pastor, as he disapproved of ministers shifting and changing from one place to another; he determined, therefore, to accept no pastorate but where he thought he should continue. It was during his ministry here that he first entertained scruples on the doctrine of the Trinity. In May, 1691, he returned to Dublin. About the year 1698 the Rev. Samuel Baxter settled here; he was the eldest son of th Rev. Nathaniel Baxter, A.M., ejected from St. Michael-upon-Player, in Lancashire; he removed to Ipswich in 1703, and was followed by the

Rev. Henry Ward, who removed to Woodbridge in 1707, when the Rev. Samuel Say succeeded. He was the second son of the Rev. Giles Say, ejected from St. Michael's, Southampton, and received his training for the ministry at Mr. Rowe's Academy, London, where he had for his fellow-students Isaac Watts, John Hughes, and Josiah Hort, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam. On leaving the Academy he was for three years chaplain to Thomas Scott, Esq., of Liminge, in Kent; thence he removed to Andover and Yarmouth, and soon after became a constant preacher at Lowestoft, where he continued eighteen years. The people were not a separate church, and he consequently was not a pastor. Mr. Say left Lowestoft in 1725, and became co-pastor with the Rev. Samuel Baxter at Ipswich.

The next minister was the Rev. Mr. Whittick, who came in 1725, and removed to Kingston-on-Thames in 1733. During his ministry this congregation became a perfectly distinct body, about the time of the separation between the Calvinistic and Arian, or Unitarian sections of the Yarmouth church. Mr. Whittick was succeeded in 1733 by the Rev. Thomas Scott, son of the Rev. Thomas Scott, of Norwich, who, before he came to Lowestoft, kept a boarding school at Wortwell, and preached at Harleston once a month; he continued here about five years and removed to Ipswich. In 1738 the Rev. Mr. Alderson became the pastor of this church, and continued in this office till his death in 1760. The congregation was but small before the year 1689; after that period they became a more numerous body, and continued to increase till 1737, when their number was very considerable.

In Evans' list it is stated that the congregation was 300, and that there were among them twenty county voters. After that they decreased considerably; and after Mr. Alderson's death, within thirty years, the names of twelve ministers follow in succession—Mr. Nasmith, William Gardiner, Matthew Jackson, from Framlingham in 1769, who died at Lowestoft, December 24th, 1771; in 1772, D. Turner, D.D., from Scotland, who removed to Woolwich in 1773; James Kirkpatrick, from the neighbourhood of Witham, who removed to Oulton and Guestwick, in Norfolk, and afterwards returned to Scotland, his native country; William Warburton; in 1774, Baxter Cole, from London, whither he returned; William Godwin, from Norfolk, who removed to Woodbridge, afterwards left the ministry and became a famous political writer, the author of "Political Justice" and other works; in 1775, Mr. Baddow, from Homerton, who removed to Stambourn, in Essex; in 1777, Richard Wearing, from Yorkshire, who removed to Rendham in 1779; Samuel Newton, from Homerton, son of Samuel Newton, of Norwich, who re-

moved to Witham in Essex. According to an account taken in 1776, there were only thirty-five persons that could properly be called Independents or Congregational dissenters; in 1790 the number of families was under twenty, but the congregation consisted of from 150 to 200 persons. At this date the congregation was without a minister, and the Rev. Messrs. Beynon and Maurice, of the old Presbyterian chapel at Yarmouth, preached alternately once a fortnight.

The Rev. Michael Maurice, above named, father of the late F. D. Maurice, of London, removed to Yarmouth in 1792, and after some years settled at Normanton, near Lowestoft, where he had a school. He was minister of this congregation eleven years, and left about 1812. He and several of his predecessors were Arians, and sympathized with the Unitarian body. On his departure he proposed to the Rev. A. Ritchie, of Wrentham, that he should undertake to supply the pulpit, which he accordingly did; and under his guidance a strictly Independent church was formed here, on the 30th of May, 1815, consisting, with the pastor, the Rev. George Steffe Crisp, of four members. Mr. Crisp removed to Aldwinkle in 1818, and was succeeded by the Rev. Owen Morris from Woodbridge, who resigned in 1821; whereupon Mr. Crisp returned, and continued his pastorate till 1833, when he finally resigned. He died in 1863, and a tablet erected to his memory in the chapel, bears the following inscription:—

Sacred to the Memory of
the Rev. George Steffe Crisp,
Nearly twenty years pastor of this Church
and Congregation:
Founder of the first Sabbath School in Lowestoft.
Emphatically the children's friend,
and the warm supporter of every good cause.
He departed this life universally regretted,
May 30th, 1863, aged 77 years.
The memory of the Just is blessed.

Mr. Crisp was succeeded by the Rev. James Williams, from Cratfield, in 1833; his ministry, however, was brief, for he died here in 1835. The Rev. John Rogers settled here in 1837, and removed to Rendham in 1844. The Rev. J. Browne, B.A., from Coward College, came in 1844, resigned in 1846, and afterwards settled at Wrentham. The Rev. Cyrus Hudson, M.A., came in 1846, and resigned in 1848. In 1849 the Rev. Henry More came from Homerton; he resigned in 1858. During Mr. More's ministry the present chapel, in London Road, was erected, and opened for public worship in 1852. In 1858 the Rev. Alfred Bourne, B.A., came, who removed to Liverpool in 1860. On

October 25th, 1860, the Rev. Richard Lewis, of Airedale College, having occupied the pulpit for eight Sundays, was unanimously invited to the pastorate, which he accepted. He commenced his ministry in December of that year. During Mr. Lewis's ministry the church enjoyed a period of remarkable prosperity, the congregation grew steadily, so that, in 1861, it was found necessary to provide increased accommodation, and the spacious galleries were added. In September, 1863, new Sunday Schools were erected at the rear of the chapel, and facing on to Nelson Road. In the same year the Jubilee of the Sunday School was celebrated. Amid these outward signs of prosperity the membership of the church steadily increased; at the close of Mr. Lewis's first year ninety-three were added to its fellowship. In March, 1864, much to the regret of his people, Mr. Lewis resigned, having accepted an invitation to Upper Norwood, London; he was succeeded by the Rev. Fairfax Goodall, from Chester-le-Street, who remained until 1880, when he entered the Episcopal Church.

In September, 1880, the Rev. Samuel Barnes Driver, from Southampton, accepted the invitation to the vacant pastorate, and for nearly a quarter of a century maintained a ministry almost unique in its influence and power. In November, 1880, the public recognition of Mr. Driver was held, at which Dr. Clemence, of London, and Dr. Barrett, of Norwich, took part. In 1882 the Sunday School was enlarged, and new class rooms added, the foundation stone being laid by J. J. Colman, Esq., of Norwich. In 1890 extensive alterations were carried out on the church building, involving an outlay of £1,000. In June, 1904, after nearly twenty-four years of active ministry, Mr. Driver resigned, owing to increasing physical weakness. It would be impossible, in this brief record, to give any adequate account of Mr. Driver's work in Lowestoft, and among the churches of the county. The following brief notices, from various sources, may be of interest. At the farewell meeting, when handsome presentations were made to Mr. and Mrs. Driver, the chairman, Mr. G. E. Clarke, voiced the feelings of all present, when he said:—

"We are met to bear testimony to fruitful labours, and to give expression to feelings of affection, esteem, and regard. With respect to the life and work of Mr. Driver it was permissible to call attention to the outward and material progress which had been made during his pastorate. That included the renovation of the London Road church, mission churches at Kirkley and Carlton, and lastly, what might be called the crowning point, the new church at South Cliff. Between £5,000 and £6,000 had been spent upon church extension

during Mr. Driver's pastorate. Numerically the church never stood so high as to-day. Mr. Driver had exercised a real and potent influence upon the energies of his people in the work of church extension and upbuilding. His teaching had been the true brotherhood of man. He had stood for union in things essential, liberty in things doubtful, and in all things had exercised the truest charity. The principles of religious equality had been strongly defended by Mr. Driver, and the Free Churches in Lowestoft were stronger for his consistent maintenance of those principles. Mr. Driver rightly regarded the pulpit as his sphere of influence. The care and lucidity with which he unfolded the Scriptures would ever live in their memories."

In the *Eastern Daily Press* the following notice appeared, July 1st, 1904:—

"The ministerial life of Lowestoft suffers a heavy loss in the retirement of the Rev. S. B. Driver from the pastorate of the Congregational Church in London Road. It is not his own denomination only, but the whole religious life of the town and country that is the poorer by such a retirement. Mr. Driver has ministered to his church for over twenty-three years; and during that period no movement for good in the town has been complete without his presence and counsel. The weight of advancing years has compelled him to restrict much of his former activity, and from restricted activity he now passes to complete retirement and well-earned rest, that we trust he will have many remaining years of health to enjoy. He has set for those who may come after him in the active work of Nonconformity in Lowestoft a standard and an ideal that they will not always find it easy to live up to; but the possession of such a standard is the best tradition any church can have. The life of a church, like the life of any other organisation, can have no better stimulus than the memory and example of those who have given their life's service to it."

In February, 1905, the Rev. T. G. Boyne, of Sudbury, received and accepted an unanimous invitation to the vacant pastorate, and entered upon his ministry in March of that year, and continued until 1916, when he removed to Cavendish. During Mr. Boyne's ministry, through the munificence of Mrs. Devereux, and her son, Mr. Edwin J. Devereux, the Lecture Hall, on the north side of the chapel, was built and presented to the church.

In June, 1913, the centenary of the Sunday School was celebrated, Dr. Adeney, Principal of Lancashire College, and Sir Francis Belsey, of London, taking part.

In March, 1917, the Rev. T. J. Hosken, of Tacket Street, Ipswich, entered upon the work here, and is the present pastor.

SOUTH CLIFF.

FOR some years a small mission had been carried on in Kendal Street, Kirkley, by the United Methodist Free Church at Lowestoft, but in 1884, experiencing some difficulty in maintaining the work, the trustees approached the London Road Congregational Church, and offered the premises for the sum of the outstanding debts. This appeal was signed by eighteen church members and twenty-nine subscribers. After due consideration the London Road Church decided to close with the offer, and the property passed into the possession of the Congregationalists. From 1885 to 1903 the work was carried on in the small room in Kendal Street. In 1902 the necessity was felt for providing increased accommodation to meet the needs of this rapidly growing district. In the local Church Magazine for August, 1900, Mr. Driver says:—

“The time seems to have come for entering upon our long-desired and much needed work at Kirkley. For years we have felt its necessity, and each year, with the growth of the suburb, adds to that necessity. We were not indifferent to its claims upon us, but there seemed no way open to us to carry out our desires. Our friend, the late Mr. J. J. Colman, agreed with us in the need of a church at Kirkley, and one of the last public acts of his life was to give us a piece of land, splendidly situated, as a spacious site for a new building. After requisite legal formalities this land has been duly conveyed to us. Trustees are appointed, and the estate at Kirkley is now the property of the Lowestoft Congregational Church. We feel that without needless delay we should carry out the donor's views, and avail ourselves of our great opportunity which his gift affords us.”

In May, 1902, Mr. Driver's desire began to take concrete shape. On the 8th of that month a large assembly gathered on the site of the new church to witness the laying of the memorial stone. The first of these was laid by Miss Colman, of Norwich, in memory of her honoured father; the second was laid by Mr. H. W. Raffe, of Ipswich, Chairman of the Suffolk Congregational Union; and the third by the Rev. S. B. Driver, pastor of the church. A public luncheon followed, presided over by Lord Battersea, at which Dr. Barrett, of Norwich, spoke; the Rev. T. M. Morris, ex-chairman of the Baptist Union of Great Britain; Messrs. H. W. Raffe, and F. Messent, of Ipswich, spoke on the mission of the Free Churches, and offered their congratulations to Mr. Driver and the Lowestoft Church on this important piece of church extension. One writer says: “Thursday, May 8th, was a memorable day in the history of our church. It is doubtful whether a more important or interesting function has ever taken place in the whole course of her long life.”

The next great event in the history of this cause was the opening for public worship of the beautiful new building, which was henceforth to be the home of this church. This event took place on Thursday, May 14th, 1903, just a year after the laying of the memorial stones. The ceremony created widespread interest throughout the district, and attracted large numbers to the sacred building. Through the kindness of Mr. Whalley, a room at the Grand Hotel was placed at the disposal of the Building Committee, and here the Revs. S. B. Driver, pastor, and F. Wheeler, assistant pastor, and other ministers assembled, with the Building Committee Deacons of the Church, Architect, and Builder, to receive Mrs. James Stuart, who was accompanied by the Misses Colman and the Mayor, with many members of the Corporation and town officials. The Mayoress was also present. A procession was formed thence to the enclosure surrounding the church, the Mayor wearing his robe and chain. A large crowd had assembled outside the oak railings surrounding the Church to witness the interesting ceremony, which commenced by the Rev. S. B. Driver requesting Mrs. Stuart to open the door of the Church. She was then presented with a silver key, and in a few appropriate words performed the opening ceremony. The Doxology was then sung, and the congregation streamed into the building, occupying every available space. The Rev. S. B. Driver conducted the service, and after one verse of the National Anthem had been sung, offered the opening prayer. Passages of Scripture were read by the Rev. F. Wheeler, and the Dedictory prayer was offered by the Pastor. The special preacher for the day was the Rev. J. D. Jones, M.A., B.D., of Bournemouth, who preached a powerful and impressive sermon from Romans v., 20. On the following Sunday a Communion service was held in the Chapel, conducted by the Rev. S. B. Driver, the special preacher for the day being the Rev. Dr. J. Brown, of London, late of Bedford.

With the increased opportunities for aggressive work which the new premises afforded, it was felt necessary to appoint a minister who would give the whole of his time to this cause. Accordingly in May, 1903, the Rev. F. Wheeler, A.T.S., of New College, received and accepted a call to this work. In November of that year Mr. Wheeler was ordained. The first part of the service was held in the South Cliff Church, Mr. Driver presiding. The usual questions were put to the young minister by the Rev. W. Heather, M.A., of Beccles, who was followed by Dr. Barrett, of Norwich, who gave a lucid exposition of Congregational Church Principles. The evening meeting was held in the London Road Church, when Dr. Vaughan Price, Principal of New College, gave the charge to the Minister, and Mr. Driver offered the Ordination Prayer. In October, 1904, Mr. Wheeler

resigned, and became assistant to Dr. Barrett, Princes Street, Norwich.

In July, 1905, the Rev. E. H. Brine, from Cheshunt College, entered upon the work here. Mr. Brine was ordained in November of that year. As in the case of his predecessor, the first part of the service was held in the London Road Church, at which Mr. Driver offered the Ordination Prayer, and Dr. Campbell Morgan, of Westminster Chapel, London, preached from John xii., 31-32. In the evening a public meeting was held, over which Mr. J. H. Grimwade, Mayor of Ipswich, and Chairman of the Suffolk Congregational Union, presided. The charge to the Pastor was given by Dr. Whitehouse, Principal of Cheshunt College. For four years Mr. Brine gave his strength and enthusiasm to the work here, and succeeded in building up a strong cause. Much to the regret of his people, he resigned in March, 1908, having accepted a call to Sheffield. He was succeeded in July of the same year by the Rev. Robert Davies, M.A., of Cheshunt College. On Thursday, November 12th, Mr. Davies was ordained. The service was held in the South Cliff Church, the Rev. T. G. Boyne, senior minister, presiding; Professor Johnson, of Cambridge, representing Cheshunt College, gave the charge to the Minister and the Rev. J. E. Ennals, Baptist Minister, of Lowestoft, offered the Ordination Prayer; the Rev. T. J. Hosken, of Ipswich, Secretary of the Suffolk Congregational Union, gave an exposition of Congregational Principles, and the Rev. E. H. Brine, of Sheffield, also delivered an address. In the evening the Rev. H. Elvet Lewis, M.A., of London, gave the charge to the Church, and thus ended an impressive and memorable day.

Mr. Davies soon won his way to the hearts of the people, and under his able ministry, helped by his genial personality, the Church became a centre of aggressive and successful activities. After eight years of devoted work, in 1916, Mr. Davies resigned, having accepted a call to Abbeydale, Sheffield. For a year the church was without a minister, the conditions prevailing under the war rendering it difficult to maintain a minister. In the Spring of 1917 it was felt, however, that some effort should be made to ensure adequate oversight of the work. After long thought and prayer it was decided to engage a student from one of our colleges, who should become temporary pastor for the period of the war, and Mr. A. W. Poulson, of Nottingham, was invited on those conditions, and entered upon the work in April, 1917.

In December, 1918, Mr. Poulson received and accepted an unanimous call to the pastorate. In July, 1919, he was ordained at South Cliff. Rev. J. A. Quail, M.A., B.D., Chairman of the Suffolk

Union, presided. Rev. J. Butterworth opened the meeting with prayer ; Mr. Poulson, father of the minister, read the Scriptures ; Mr. Ernest Devereux, Secretary, made a statement on behalf of the church ; the Rev. Principal Ritchie, D.D., of Nottingham, gave the charge to the minister, and the Rev. Prof. Saunders gave the charge to the church ; the Rev. T. J. Hosken offered the ordination prayer.

OULTON BROAD.

Like many another cause, the church at Oulton had a very humble origin. The Mother Church at Lowestoft was passing through a period of great spiritual prosperity, and the result of this was a fine outburst of the mission spirit. Mr. Vince Bernard, the senior deacon of the Lowestoft church, suggested that there was a favourable opening for a mission church at the corner of Carlton Colville, now incorporated within the urban district of Oulton. He purchased two wooden sheds, and removed them from Lowestoft beach to the suggested site, and the work forthwith commenced. From the first this work was crowned with blessing, and was full of promise. Impressed with the success of the undertaking, Mr. Bernard arranged for the erection of what is known as the Stone Chapel. This was opened for Divine service on September 6th, 1858, and on January 4th, 1860, at a large gathering, Mr. Bernard was presented with several tokens of gratitude for the interest he had taken in the young cause at Oulton. In the early days of this mission the Rev. G. S. Crisp, for many years pastor of the Lowestoft church, rendered valuable service here. The mission also was greatly aided by Mr. Michael Hinde, who, for five years, conducted the Sunday services. Other names of men who devoted themselves to this cause should not be forgotten: Messrs. Ducker, Delf, Dutt, Flood, and Abbott. In 1885 the work had grown to such an extent that it was found necessary to appoint an Evangelist who should divide his time and energy between the work at Oulton and a new mission which had been started, in the previous year, at Kirkley. Mr. W. Amer was appointed to this office in January, 1885, and resigned in 1887, when he accepted a call to the pastorate of the church at Woodbridge. He was succeeded, in 1888, by Mr. G. S. Martin, who resigned in 1896. In the following year the Rev. F. J. Leyton, of New College, succeeded, and his attractive ministry, with its special appeal to the young, soon made its influence felt in the neighbourhood. The old building soon became too small for the increasing congregation, and in

October of the same year (1897) the present iron building was erected. The opening sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Barrett, of Norwich, and an overflow meeting had to be provided for. The tea meeting which followed the service was a record for Carlton.

In the evening the new building was crammed to the doors, and the meeting was the most encouraging and enthusiastic which had ever been held in connection with the cause. Mr. A. G. Boyd, of South Lowestoft, occupied the chair, and addresses were delivered by the Revs. A. A. Dowsett, of Ipswich, S. B. Driver, F. J. Leyton, and others.

In October, 1898, Mr. Leyton's ordination took place in the London Road Church, Lowestoft. Large congregations assembled afternoon and evening.

The Churches of the surrounding district were largely represented by their ministers, whilst every minister of the Free Churches of Lowestoft was present. At the afternoon meeting the Scripture was read and prayer offered by the Rev. J. Bedworth Jones, of Leiston. A statement was made by Mr. G. E. Clarke, secretary of the church; the usual questions were asked by the Rev. W. Heather, M.A., of Beccles, and an address on Church Principles was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Barrett, of Norwich. In the evening a large congregation assembled, when Dr. Vaughan Price, Principal of New College, gave the charge to the minister and the Rev. S. B. Driver offered the ordination prayer. Thus ended one of the "red letter" days in the history of the Lowestoft church. In July, 1899, Mr. Leyton resigned, having accepted an invitation to the pastorate of a church in Stafford. In the following year the Rev. W. H. Edwards, B.A., was appointed, and resigned in December, 1902. The Rev. F. Wheeler followed, and was succeeded by the Rev. E. H. Brine*.

Owing to the growing importance of the Kirkley Mission, and the increasing demands of the work at Oulton, it was found necessary to appoint a junior assistant, and in January, 1906, Mr. M. Stacey, from Sussex, entered upon the work, being made responsible solely for Oulton. After a very successful ministry Mr. Stacey resigned in November 1913, and removed to Bulford, Wilts. He was succeeded in April, 1914, by the Rev. J. Butterworth, of Boxford, who is the present minister, and under whose devoted ministry the prosperity of this cause is fully maintained; indeed, Oulton was never more successful than it is to-day.

* See South Cliff.

SOMERLEYTON.

WHEN Sir Morton Peto, Bart., purchased the Somerleyton estate in 1846, he found that about half-a-dozen of the inhabitants of the parish were accustomed to attend a small chapel at Hopton, supported by the Congregational Church at Yarmouth, he engaged Mr. Johnson, afterwards Sailors' Missionary at Lowestoft, who conducted services, first in a cottage, and then in a newly erected schoolroom, and then the present chapel was built for the convenience and advantage equally for the family at the hall, and the inhabitants of the village. The Rev. J. Earle began his ministry here in 1849, and was succeeded, in 1851, by the Rev. James Dunckley. The Rev. Charles Shakespere followed in 1854, and remained till 1860, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Charles Daniel, early in whose ministry the estate was transferred to Sir Francis Crossley, Bart., who died in 1872. Mr. Daniel removed in 1873, was succeeded by the Rev. Francis Watts, late a Tutor at Spring Hill College, whose ministry extended only over a few weeks, when he was removed by death. The Rev. Joseph Muncaster followed in 1874; he had been twenty years as a pastor in Manchester. Since his time the work has been sustained mainly by lay preachers from Lowestoft and neighbourhood. Rigid denominationalism is excluded, and Christians of every name have been freely invited to the Lord's Table. At present the church is composed of Congregationalists and Baptists in almost equal numbers.

WICKHAMBROOK.

THIS Congregational Church doubtless owes its origin to the labours of the Rev. Samuel Cradock, B.D., who, on his ejection from North Cadbury, in Somersetshire, took up his abode here, on his own estate. He opened his house for divine worship, and devoted his learning to the education of young men, among whom was the celebrated Dr. E. Calamy. He organised a church in his house, and in 1672 was licensed a Presbyterian teacher at "Geerings in Wickham," and continued to preach for a period of twenty-six years, when he removed, in 1696, to Bishop Stortford, and became pastor of a Congregational Church at Stanstead Mount Fitchet. He laboured there ten years, and then died at the age of 86, and was buried at Wickhambrook October 7th, 1706. His Non-conformity cost him £13,000, and he never repented of it; but said, in reference to it, "God gave me my living, he called for it, and I readily parted with it; of Thine own have I given thee."

A barn on the Badmondisfield estate, belonging to the family of Warner, was licensed for public worship the year before Mr. Cradock left Wickhambrook, and here, in all probability, the Rev. Richard Rawlin, and the Rev. Isaac Fuller, who were successively chaplains in the family of Andrew Warner, Esq., ministered to the congregation. Mr. Rawlin removed to Bishop Stortford, and thence to Fetter Lane, London, and Mr. Fuller to Finchingfield. According to Evans' List, Mr. Richmond was here in 1716, and the congregation numbered one hundred and fifty.

On August 6th, 1726, the Rev. Thomas Priest, from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, came to this place; he built the first chapel, and died, after a long and useful life, in 1772. He gathered the church, which has continued in existence to the present time. The cause greatly declined under Mr. Priest's successor, the Rev. Rowland Smith, who was non-resident, and an Arian; he resigned his charge in 1810, and was succeeded by the Rev. Stephen Johnson, who came in 1813, from Leek, in Staffordshire. He married the daughter of N. W. Bromley, Esq., through whose exertions the cause had been greatly enlarged. Mr. Johnson died in 1838, after a successful pastorate of a quarter of a century. During his ministry the church at Wickhambrook became the parent of other churches in the neighbourhood. In 1818 the cause at Cowlinge was commenced; in later years Thurlow came into being, and in 1833 the cause at Stansfield was commenced by the Rev. John Rutter, who was originally connected with Wickhambrook.

In 1838 the Rev. H. Coleman, from Newport Pagnell College, succeeded Mr. Johnson, and after a similarly useful pastorate of the same length, removed to Halesworth, in 1864. His successor was the Rev. T. J. Kightley, from Burwell, who removed to Leiston in 1873; he was succeeded by the Rev. F. Vaughan, who came from Amberley in the same year. Mr. Vaughan had been trained at the Cavendish Theological College, Manchester, which afterwards developed into the Nottingham Institute.

In 1874 Mr. Joseph Woolard, of Broxted Lodge, Hundon, who had always manifested a deep interest in the church, bequeathed the sum of £80 to be added to the endowment previously bequeathed by the Rev. M. Priest. In 1877 an organ was installed in the chapel, and opened on June 21st by D. Gurteen, Esq., of Haverhill. The chapel was crowded on this occasion, and the service was one of intense interest. The Pastor, the Rev. F. Vaughan, writes:—"The erection of the organ has been a work in which many hearts and hands have been lovingly engaged, and it is earnestly hoped that it may really prove to be what we have long desired, a help in our service of song in the House of the Lord."

In September, 1880, Mr. Vaughan resigned, and was succeeded, in the following year, by the Rev. Charles Brown, who remained till 1885, when he resigned. In August, 1886, the Rev. John Sharp, of Bradford-on-Avon, accepted the call to the pastorate. During Mr. Sharp's ministry the chapel underwent extensive alterations at a cost of £200. In 1889 Mr. Sharp resigned and emigrated to Canada. In the same year, the Rev. Joseph W. Scamell, A.T.S., of the Yorkshire United College, entered upon the pastorate, and was ordained in October of the same year. In 1891 the Schoolroom was enlarged, and three class-rooms built, at a cost of £150, the mission room at Lidgate was also renovated at the same time. In 1894 Mr. Scamell removed to Welford, Northamptonshire, and was succeeded, in the same year, by the Rev. Alfred Butcher. In 1897 a mission room was erected at Stradishall, Mr. and Mrs. S. Thomson assisting very generously in this effort. In 1903 Mr. Butcher, having accepted an invitation to Camden Town, resigned, greatly to the regret of the church, which placed on record the following resolution:—

“The church and Committee desire to place on record their thankfulness to God for the blessing the church has received during the nine years' ministry of the Rev. A. Butcher, and their prayer that the same Divine blessing may follow him in the new sphere of work to which he has lately been called.”

In 1904 the Rev. James Thomas, of Aberley, Wales, entered upon the pastorate, and resigned in 1907, when he removed to Aberfan; he was succeeded, in the same year, by the Rev. G. E. Page, and a “ministry of peculiar refinement, gentleness, courtesy, and spirituality, was brought to an abrupt termination by an accident, which resulted in Mr. Page's death on May 24th, 1912.” The funeral took place on May 29th, and was conducted by the Rev. A. J. Brown, of Bury St. Edmund's. A memorial service was held on the following Sunday, when the Rev. G. H. Grey, of Birch Hill Park, occupied the pulpit, and voiced the feelings of all present when he said that “Among the various ministers of the Wickhambrook Congregational Church, that of the Rev. G. E. Page would not be the least deep and fruitful, though lacking in outward show and activity.” In November, 1912, the Rev. James Mogg, of Sunbury-on-Thames, accepted an unanimous invitation to the pastorate, and commenced his ministry on the first Sunday in January, 1913. In this year the mission room at Stradishall was closed. Mr. Mogg continued till June, 1917, when he accepted an invitation to Stebbing, Essex, and was succeeded, in 1919, by the Rev. F. W. Whiting, from Oulton, Norfolk, who is the present minister.

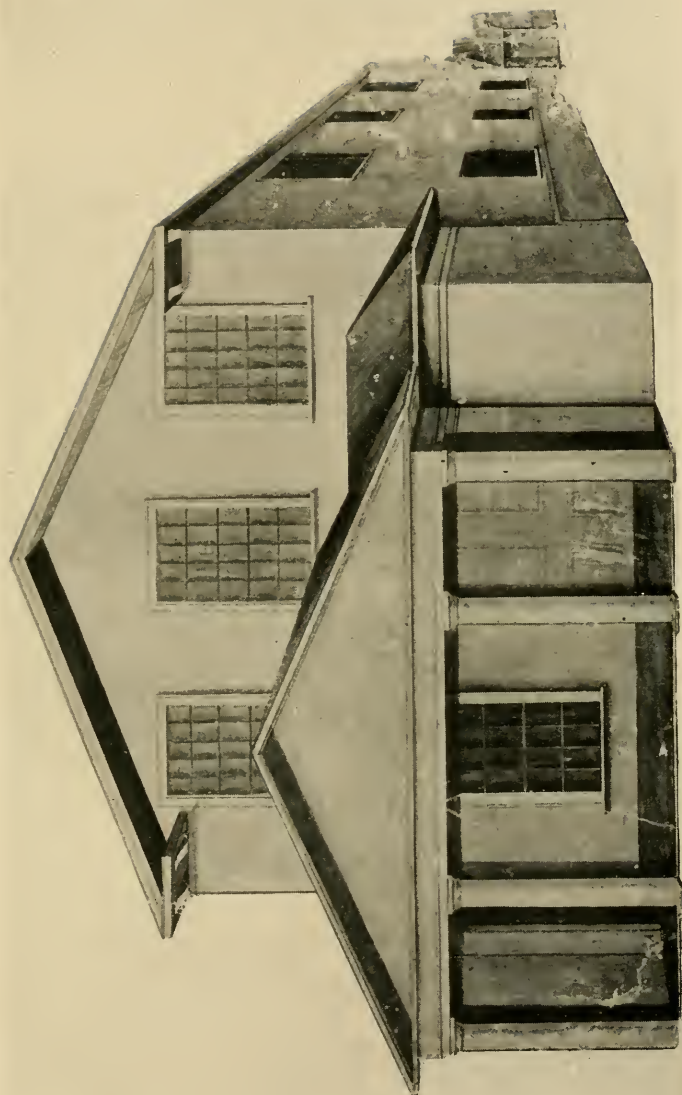
STOWMARKET.

THE origin of Nonconformity in Stowmarket is somewhat obscure. It is generally claimed that Dr. Thomas Young, Vicar of Stowmarket from 1627 to 1645, a very learned and able divine, was the instigator of the movement which resulted in the formation of a Nonconformist Church in this town. Dr. Young is but known as the tutor of John Milton. From the several references to this matter in Milton's writings, it is evident that he regarded him with a very deep and sincere affection. Mr. Ritchie, in his interesting volume on *East Anglia*, says:—

“Never had master a better pupil, or one who rewarded him more richly by the splendour of his subsequent career. The poet, writing to him a few years after he ceased to be his pupil, speaks of ‘the incredible and singular gratitude he owed him on account of the services he had done him,’ and calls God to witness that he revered him as his father. In a Latin elegy, after implying that Young was dearer to him than Socrates to Alcibiades, or than the great Stagerite to his generous pupil, Alexander, he goes on to say: ‘First, under his guidance, I explored the recesses of the Muses, and beheld the sacred green spots on the cleft summit of Parnassus and quaffed the Pierian cups, and, Clio favouring me, thrice, sprinkled my joyful mouth with Castilian wine’; from which it is clear that Young had done his duty to his pupil, and that the latter ever regarded him with an affection as beautiful as rare.”

How long Young's preceptorship lasted cannot be determined with precision. “It certainly closed,” writes Professor Maison, “when Young left England at the age of thirty-five, and became pastor of the congregation of British merchants settled at Hamburg.”

Whilst vicar of Stowmarket, Dr. Young was a Presbyterian, a member of the celebrated Westminster Assembly of Divines; he was also one of a small company of divines who became known as the “Smectymnuans.” This was a made-up word containing the initials of the five men who wrote protesting against Bishop Hall's treatise called “An humble remonstrance.” This treatise defended Episcopacy as of divine origin, and in replying to this the Smectymnuan Divine undertook to prove (1) The scriptural equality of bishops and presbyters; (2) To point out the occasion of Episcopal



STOWMARKET INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, 1721(?)—1861.

authority; (3) To show the dissimilarity between ancient and modern bishops; (4) To vindicate the antiquity of ruling elders; (5) To bound the Prelatical Church. It is easy to understand how such a man, with such views, would sow the seeds of Non-conformity; indeed, he was himself a most determined dissenter from the high-churchisms of Laud, and from Episcopacy as a system of church government.

It was probably during his residence as vicar of Stowmarket that some of Young's numerous writings attracted the notice of some of the persecuting leaders of the Episcopal Church, and to escape the tortures of the Star Chamber, he fled the country. Milton refers to this exile in his Latin elegy:

"Meanwhile alone
Thou dwellest, and helpless on a soil unknown,
Poor, and receiving from a foreign hand
The aid denied thee in thy native land."

It seems from this that the living at Stowmarket was under sequestration. A little while after Young is back at Stowmarket, and Milton thus describes his daily life—a personal experience of the poet, not a flight of fancy.

"Now, entering, thou shall haply seated see
Besides his spouse, his infants on his knee;
Or, turning page by page with studious look
Some bulky paper or God's holy book."

Good times came to Dr. Young. The seed he had sown bore fruit. For awhile England had woke up to attack the Stuart doctrine of royal prerogative in Church and State. The men of Suffolk had been foremost in the fight, and in 1643 we find the Doctor in Duke's Place, London. A sermon was preached by him before the House of Commons, and printed by order of the House. There is a copy of this sermon in the library of the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, with the date February 28th, 1643, and with the notice that

"It is this day ordered by the Commoners House of Parliament that Sir John Trevor, and Mr. Rous do from this House give thanks to Mr. Young for the great paines hee tooke in the sermon hee preached that day at the entreaty of the said House of Commons at St. Margaret's, Westminster, it being the day of publicke humiliation, and to desire him to print this sermon,"

which accordingly was done under the title of "Hope's encouragement."

In 1643 the Earl of Manchester ejected many of the Royalist clergymen from their livings who were scandalous ministers. Dr. Sterne having been deprived of the mastership of Jesus College, Cambridge, the Stowmarket Vicar was placed there

in his stead. He held this position till 1654, when, on his refusal of the engagement, Government deprived him of his office. He returned to Stowmarket, where he died on November 28th, 1655, aged 68. He lies buried in the chancel of the church there under a marble stone, with a monumental inscription, in which the efforts of the erasing chisel of some high churchman are to this day to be seen.* But the following copy was made when the epitaph was fresh and legible:—

“ Here is committed to earth’s trust,
Wise, Pious, spotlesse, learned dust,
Who living, more adorned the place
Than the place him. Such was God’s grace.”*

While Dr. Young may be regarded as the pioneer of Nonconformity in Stowmarket, the man who sowed the seed from which others reaped the harvest, he can hardly be recognised as the direct founder of the church; that, however, belongs to his successor, the Rev. John Stover, M.A., of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who was presented to the living by Mr. Blackerby. He had been seven years lecturer at St. Giles’, Cripplegate, and eleven years preacher at Beckenham, in Kent, and then, till the Restoration, minister in the parish of St. Martin’s Vintry, London. He accepted the living of Stowmarket on condition that he should resign it again in time, if the terms of conformity settled by authority, were such as he could not consent to. Accordingly when, among other things, he found it was required to renounce the Covenant, he durst not think of keeping his living, and resigned it to his patron before the Bartholomew Act took effect.

His successor the *Rev. Samuel Blackerby*, was instituted February 9th, 1662-3, and the register states that it was “*per resignacoem ultimi incumbentis*.” Having purchased an estate at Highgate, called Sherrick, held of the King at a small rent paid to the church, and worth about £70 per annum, Mr. Stover took up his abode there, but was wronged of it by Sir Henry Wood; whereupon he set up a school, but was prosecuted in the spiritual court and forced to desist. The Five-Mile Act then drove him from his home, and he was exposed to various hardships. God in His providence cared for him, and he died in peace; but the date is not given. In 1672 he was licensed as a Presbyterian Teacher in his own house at Highgate.

During Mr. Blackerby’s ministry, the Rev. John Meadows, ejected from Ousden, came to reside at Stowmarket. The following note from Noncon. Memorials, concerning him may be of interest: “John Meadows, M.A., was born at Chat-

* See “East Anglia,” by J. Ewing Ritchie, pp. 283-310.

tisham, April 7th, 1622; admitted into Emmanuel College February 25th, 1639; took his M.A. degree at Christ's College 1646. He married a daughter of Robert Rant, Esq., of Swaffham Priors, and settled at Ousden August 26th, 1653. He was ordained April 17th, 1657, in the Presbyterian way, by William Pickering, Minister of Denham, Jonathan Jephcot, minister of Swaffham Priors, and Abraham Wright, minister of Cheveley; he was presented to the living of Ousden by Henry Moseley, the patron; and, having satisfied the "Commissioners for approbation of Publique preachers," he was inducted May 7th, 1658. He was ejected in 1662, and a relative, John Green, was instituted in his stead. On leaving the rectory he lived at Ousden Hall, from which he removed, about 1670, in consequence of the renewal of the Five Mile Act; and we find him in 1672 licensed to preach in his own house at Stowmarket. Whilst here he married, for his second wife, Sarah, the granddaughter of Benjamin Fairfax, ejected from Romborough, and niece of John Fairfax, ejected from Barking; and greatly assisted several of the ejected ministers in their distress. During his residence at Stowmarket he frequently went to Bury to preach, and after his second wife's death he removed to that town, about the time of the Revolution. He died at Bury in 1696, aged 74, and was buried at Stowmarket. "He was a holy person in all manner of conversation, and his enemies could only object his Nonconformity as a crime. He was really a pattern of true religion. He preached freely; he lived exemplary; he died comfortably in the 75th year of his age." In addition to his own house, the houses of Elizabeth Nelson and Jonathan Peake were also licensed for Nonconformist worship; but these arrangements were not directly connected with the establishment of the Congregational Church.

In this neighbourhood there were, in addition to Mr. Fairfax, at Needham, the Rev. Richard Jennings, who was ejected from Combs; the Rev. Thomas Holborough, from Battisford, and the Rev. John Weld, from Bildeston; the only one of these who was a Congregationalist and afterwards licensed, was Mr. Holborough. "As he was instituted at Battisford, February 20th, 1628, he must have been an elderly man at the time of his ejection; yet, ten years later, in 1672, we find him a licensed Congregational teacher in his own house at Battisford. Quaint old Thos. Holborough, with his wrinkled face and silver hairs, preaching the everlasting gospel to the gathered faithful in his house at Battisford is, as I read him, one of the early founders of this Congregational Church."*

* L. Caws, "History of Stowmarket Church."

Between 1672 and 1696 the record of this church is almost a blank. Owing probably to Mr. Holborough's advancing age regular preaching services could not be maintained; and it appears that the Christians of the Congregational persuasion here connected themselves with the Bury Church, which maintained preaching at Finborough and about Combs, and which at length consented that several of its members residing in this locality should be constituted a separate Congregational Church. The record of the transaction is as follows:—"The brethren whose names are underwritten, being members of this church, and dwelling in and about Combs, taking into consideration some inconvenience that did accompanie their locall distance from Bury, desired by letter and messenger that this church would give them leave to embody and become a distinct and p'ticular church by themselves, and craved the assistance of the church therein, which was granted, and accordingly three messengers went over, viz., Jas. Noble, Elder; Robert Hayward, Deacon; John Elsegood, another member of this church, who assisted and directed them in their entering into covenant, and were witnesses of their sitting down as a p'ticular church, approving of what they did, and also gave them the right hand of fellowship. There were present also Mr. Beart and Mr. Wincall, members of the Church of Christ, at Ipswich, consenting and approving." Then followed twenty-three names. These transactions took place in 1696.

This newly-formed church met in a building, which they rented, on that part of Battisford Tye abutting upon Combs, near to where the Punch Bowl Inn now stands. "There is an old building standing there to-day" (1886), says Mr. Caws, "which has been in the possession of Mr. Durant's family about a hundred years, and old Mr. Cooper, Baptist minister, always believed it to be the house referred to here. It was used for a great number of years within living memory for preaching purposes."

The first known pastor of this church was the Rev. Thomas Prince, a graduate of Harvard University, America, who settled here early in the eighteenth century. For eight years he laboured among his small, scattered flock at Battisford and Combs, nor, it would appear, without good results and some marks of the Divine favour. The date of his settlement cannot be determined with certainty, but he was here in 1719, when the congregation numbered about 200. Closing his pastorate here, he returned to America, and took a considerable number of his congregation with him. In America he became Dr. Sewel's colleague at the Old South Church in Boston, and was associated with President Edwards and others in the great

American revivals. He died in 1758, at the age of 72. Mr. Prince's departure seems to have sorely shaken the little church, for he had not long left when the congregation separated into two parts, one part settling at Bildeston, the other at Stowmarket, and at the latter place, about 1721, the first meeting house was built, chiefly through the generosity of Mr. Robert Pett. There is extant a copy of an agreement between Mr. R. Pett and two joiners, Messrs. Doole and Frost, dated April 4th, 1719. From this agreement we gather that the building contained a gallery, that it had two doors, a desk for the minister, and a desk for the clerk, with twelve pews in the body of the chapel.

The first ministers who supplied the pulpit in the new building were Mr. George Wright, a gentleman of considerable fortune, residing in Ipswich, and Mr. George Currie, of whom very little is known. But these were not settled pastors. The first minister, who settled amongst the people in the regular pastorate, was the Rev. Samuel Choyce, who had been minister of the Independent Church then existing at Colkirk, in Norfolk. "He was a truly pious man of superior education, and during his pastorate the place was well attended." Mr. Choyce settled here in 1723, and remained until his death, February 5th, 1745.

The Rev. Benjamin Sowden, from Aylesbury, who was for some time as assistant to Mr. Choyce, was elected to succeed him, and on August 13th, 1746, was ordained pastor of the church. Under him the congregation increased in numbers, but in 1748 he removed to Rotterdam, where he became Presbyterian pastor to one of the churches on the Dutch Establishment. He was a pupil and friend of Dr. Philip Doddridge, and the historian says of him, "He was hardly fit to be a dissenting minister, to depend upon the justice and goodwill of a congregation for support."

The next pastor was the Rev. John Tailer, who came from Rochford, in Essex. He also had been a pupil of Mr. Doddridge. He came in 1748, and in 1760 removed to Carter Lane Meeting House, London, where he continued about six years, and then died. About this time Arian sentiments were introduced into the congregation, and it very greatly declined, until one hundred was considered a large attendance.

Mr. Tailer was succeeded by the Rev. George Archer, from Daventry, in 1761, who was ordained September 23rd, 1763, and died of a violent fever in August, 1771. He was buried in the chancel of the church, and was succeeded in the following year by the Rev. Habakkuk Crabb, also from Daventry.

From the Wattisfield Church Book it appears that he was baptized August 8th, 1750, so that he was about 22 years of age when he undertook the work at Stowmarket in 1772. He was the son of a deacon at Wattisfield. He remained for four years and removed to Cirencester. In 1777 the Rev. John Peacock came from Broadway, Somersetshire, and was here three years; he was succeeded, in 1783, by the Rev. William Godwin, who subsequently appeared in the character of a philosopher, novelist, and historian; the author of "The History of the Commonwealth" and "Political Justice." He remained only twelve months, and never seems to have been happy in the Christian ministry. The Rev. Elias Fordham was here for a time, who afterwards removed to Royston, and in 1786 the Rev. Samuel Lowrie was ordained pastor. From the Wattisfield Church Book, written by Mr. Harmer, pastor of that church, the following note will be of interest as throwing some light on the condition of things at Stowmarket. "The ordination," he says, "was celebrated according to our usual forms, with prayer and the laying on of the hands of the elders of several of the neighbouring churches, after there had been great disorders in the church and assembly, with respect to the entire neglect of ordination in the time of Mr. Godwin; and a strange kind of privacy in the time of Mr. Fordham, who succeeded Mr. Godwin, it not being performed in the usual place of worship, but in a private apartment over the meeting place, commonly called the vestry, no elders or deputies from other churches attending, or being desired to attend, and all this under the pretence of avoiding superstition; but there is reason to believe from other principles, and certainly in opposition to the precept, 1 Cor. xiv., 40, and not agreeably to the spirit of Col. ii., 5, and I. Cor. xi., 16. May this church from time to time be more circumspect and stedfast." Mr. Lowrie's ministry, however, was not a success. "It will be kindest and best," says Mr. Caws, "to draw the veil over this period. When immorality creeps, serpent-like, into the pulpit what wonder if its tongue of sulphurous flame and eyes of fire are seen in the pews. When the blind lead the blind the ditch is close at hand." In 1791 the Rev. Thomas Colborne, from Oulton, in Norfolk, was here, and remained four years, and then returned to Oulton. He is described as "a good, but lethargic man"; he was succeeded in 1794 by the Rev. Thomas Hickman, who remained two years and removed to Lavenham. The Rev. Messrs. Mills and Pratman, the latter of whom was afterwards at Barnard Castle, were here for a short time, and they were followed by the Rev. William Walford, who was unanimously invited to become the pastor. He continued here nearly two years and went to Yarmouth. In 1800 the Rev.

William Laxon, from Hoxton Academy, settled here, and was ordained in October of that year. The number of church members at this time was 13, and the amount collected at the communion service for the year was £7. Mr. Laxon resigned in October, 1804, and was succeeded by the Rev. William Ward, who had been tutor at Wymondley College, and late pastor of the church at Uppingham, and under his active, intelligent, and truly Christian ministry the congregation became one of the largest in the county. In 1805, at a church meeting held November 1st, it was resolved that

“The church had not been within memory regularly Congregational, or properly attentive to discipline, and it was resolved to proceed in future with more strictness and regularity, and as a first step thereto, Mr. John Bayley Tailer and Mr. Manning Prentice were unanimously chosen deacons.”

“This is the first mention I find,” says Mr. Caws, “of a name widely known in this locality, and as widely honoured, I mean the family of Prentice.” For more than a century this name has been more or less closely interwoven with the history and fortunes of Nonconformity in this town and neighbourhood. The same may be said of other family names which now appear upon the church records, viz., Lankester, Fison, Harwood, and Webb.

For some time prior to this the congregation had begun to increase again, and in the first year of Pastor Ward's ministry (1805) the chapel was enlarged by one-third of its original size. In 1808 it was again enlarged and things went smoothly and prosperously. In 1812 died Mr. J. B. Tailer, deacon, and son of the former minister here, and was buried at Woodbridge. From 1812 to 1832 Mr. Manning Prentice seems to have been the sole deacon, while in 1820 the chapel was enlarged for the third time, which proves conclusively that the congregation was also a growing one. The church membership now numbered 46. In 1834 yet another addition to the accommodation was made. Mr. Ward had held the pastorate for thirty-three years when the church decided to appoint an assistant, or co-pastor, and, in 1841, the Rev. John Curwen, from Basingstoke, was chosen; he relinquished the office in May, 1842, and was succeeded by the Rev. Alfred Scales, who resigned shortly before the death of Mr. Ward.

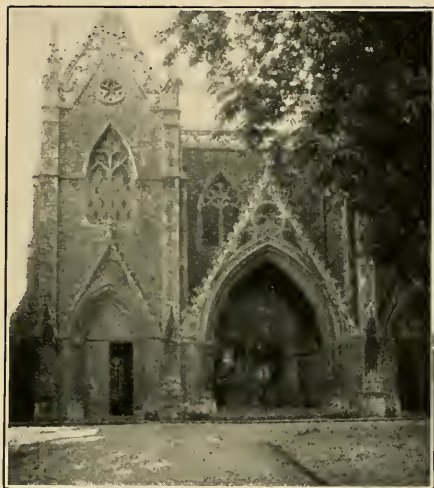
Mr. Ward died January 2nd, 1846, and was buried in the meeting house. He was succeeded in 1846 by the Rev. W. .P. Lyon, B.A., from Albany Chapel, London, who removed at the close of 1848. In 1849 the Rev. Thomas H. Brown, from Deal, accepted the pastorate, which he retained till April, 1857.

He retired in September of that year and removed to High Wycombe. In 1858 the Rev. Jonah Reeve, from Morley, became pastor, and for twenty years maintained a faithful and consistent ministry. It was during Mr. Reeve's ministry that the present beautiful chapel was erected; a chapel was also erected at Finborough, upon ground magnanimously given by Mr. Archer. Mr. Reeve's ministry is still remembered and treasured by those who were privileged to attend it. Towards the close of his pastorate Mr. Reeve enjoyed, for about two years, the help of the Rev. Charles England, who afterwards removed to Leeds. In 1879 Mr. Reeve retired.

He was succeeded in the same year by the Rev. Thomas Jeffreys, whose painful and premature death in 1883 moved the neighbourhood, and called out the practical and generous sympathy of the church towards the widow and children. In 1884 the Rev. Luther W. Caws, from New College, became pastor, and for twelve years exercised a powerful and growing influence on the church and district. It was with profound regret that the church in 1896 felt compelled to accept his resignation owing to failing health. For some years Mr. Caws has conducted Free Church services at Hyères, France, during the Winter months.

In 1896 the Rev. Thomas Simon, of Balham, entered upon the pastorate, and for more than twenty years maintained a ministry of rare power and culture.. Mr. Simon retired from the pastorate at the close of 1918, and was succeeded by the Rev. F. J. Weir, B.A., from Western College.

In addition to the work carried on in Stowmarket itself, the church maintains and works a number of out-stations at Combs, Finborough, Haughley, Stowupland, and West Creeting.



STOWMARKET CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL,
Present Day.

FRAMLINGHAM.

RICHARD GOLTIE, son-in-law of Samuel Ward, of Ipswich, was instituted to the Rectory of Framlingham, September 7th, 1630. In 1650 he refused the engagement to submit to the then existing government, and was removed, when Henry Sampson, M.A., Fellow of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, was appointed by his College to the vacancy. He continued here till the Restoration 1660, which he continued to hold till his death in 1678. Loder, in his history of this town, says that—

“Not being satisfied to conform (Mr. Sampson continued awhile preaching at Framlingham, to those who were attached to his ministry, in private houses and other buildings, and by his labours laid the foundation of the Congregational or Independent Church of Dissenters in that town, as appears from a note in the Church Book belonging to the Dissenters at Woodbridge, meeting at the Quay Lane.” He died in 1705. It appears that in 1672, Mr. Plumstead, of Wrentham, preached to the Independents of this town and neighbourhood. But the first settled minister known was the Rev. Samuel Baxter, who removed to Lowestoft in 1698, and afterwards to Ipswich. He was succeeded by a Mr. Smith, who removed to Norwich, after the death of the Rev. Martin Finch, of that city. The after-history of Mr. Smith is not pleasant reading. He was the cause of a serious dispute at Norwich with a Mr. Nokes on the question of the co-partnership with Mr. Stackhouse. He was dismissed by the Norwich Church, and died under reproach for immorality. The Rev. Samuel Lodge, M.A., educated at Glasgow, followed. ‘He was a gentleman of figure and fortune and a considerable preacher,’ who continued here seventeen years, but was not ordained till just before his death, which took place April 20th, 1772. He is buried in the south aisle of the church. The Rev. Richard Chorley succeeded; he was here for eight or nine years, but suffered from an imperfection of sight, which terminated in blindness: he therefore resigned his ministry. The Rev. Thomas Cook was ordained in September, 1735, and died in July, 1739. He had been educated by the Rev. S. Wood, of Lavenham. The Rev. Samuel Wood, the younger son of the Rev. S. Wood, of Lavenham and Woodbridge, succeeded in 1740. He had been a pupil of Dr. Doddridge, who gave him the charge at his Ordination, July 13th, 1744; he married the youngest daughter of the Rev. J. Meadows, of Needham Market. He resigned in 1756, turned his attention

to physic, but died of smallpox shortly after. The Rev. Jeremiah Longfield followed about 1758, but removed after two or three years, and was succeeded by the Rev. John Walker, from Long Buckby, who came in October, 1760, and was settled in the pastorate April 2nd, 1761; he removed to Walpole in 1767. The Rev. Samuel Say Toms, son of the Rev. J. Toms, of Hadleigh, came in August, 1773. Mr. Harmer says of the church at this date: "They were formerly considered Presbyterian, but of late years strongly inclined towards the Congregational plan." Mr. Toms was pastor here for fifty-six years, and resigned August 29th, 1829. During his pastorate "he openly avowed Socinian sentiments, since which period the congregation has considerably declined. Having obtained, from one of the trustees, the deeds of the chapel, he continued to hold possession of the pulpit, thus adding one to the multitude of instances of wilful perversion of property, charitably intended for far different purposes." Since Mr. Toms' time the church has been Unitarian. It is evident that while Mr. Toms remained in possession of the chapel property a number of his old adherents seceded from his ministry, and for a time either met in private houses, or found a spiritual home in some of the neighbouring churches. It is recorded that "In 1817, Mr. Samuel Dale, Sen., a resident of the town, but a member of Rendham Independent Church, which he constantly attended, made an attempt to institute a prayer meeting, and a society for missionary purposes was formed. His son, S. Dale, proposed the same to Mr. Fruer, who gave it his hearty concurrence. On November 17th (1816 or 17) a meeting was held on the subject at the house of Mr. Dale, Jun., when a society was formed, of which Mr. Fruer was elected secretary and Mr. Thompson treasurer. It was suggested to the Rev. Mr. Haward, of Rendham, to interest his congregation in the work, and Mr. Haward consenting, attended the monthly prayer meetings; then he was asked to preach when he came over, and to this he consented. The people expressed a desire for more frequent services, and applied to the Rev. Mr. Cox, of Hadleigh, requesting him to apply to the Suffolk Itinerant Society for promoting assistance, and obtained a grant of £15 for the purpose of securing preachers on Sundays. The Rev. Mr. Wooley, of Wickham Market, preached once on the Sunday, and then on Thursday evening. Soon after the house became too small, and Mr. Fruer converted a cottage of his own into a place of public worship, which he granted gratuitously; it was capable of accommodating 200 persons, and was opened on May 4th, 1819, on which occasion the Rev. Mr. Cox, of Hadleigh, and the Rev. Mr. Garthwaite, of Wattisfield, preached." The growing congregation expressed the desire for a minister who could devote the whole of his time to the increasing needs of this virile young

cause; another appeal was made to the Itinerant Society, and the former grant was doubled. Application was then made to the Rev. G. Colison, of Hackney, for supplies, and Messrs. Horam, Guy, Fisher, Carlille and Muscutt came frequently.

On December 7th 1820, during the visit of Mr. Muscutt, a church was formed; the Rev. Mr. Haward, of Rendham, presided, and administered the Lord's Supper. The following eight members were united in Church fellowship:

Samuel Dale, from the church at Rendham; John Fruer, Samuel Dale, Jun., Henry Thompson, John Fruer, Jun., from the church at Woodbridge; Francis Runnacles, Francis Bush, and May Taylor. The Rev Mr. Barnes succeeded Mr. Muscutt in supplying the pulpit for a short time.

In April, 1821, Mr. Fruer enlarged the place of worship to accommodate 40 additional hearers, and 60 children; a Sunday school was also founded, with 15 children and 3 teachers.

The first settled pastor of the new church was the Rev. Thomas Rutton-Morris, from Hockcliffe, Bedfordshire, who commenced his labours in June, 1821, but resigned the following year.

In September, 1822, the Rev. Thomas Quinton Stow, from the Academy at Gosport, occupied the pulpit, and, after a short time, received an invitation to the pastorate, which he accepted for twelve months, but which was renewed at the end of that period. It was during Mr. Stow's ministry that a piece of land was purchased for a new church, and on April 6th, 1823, Mr. Stow laid the foundation of the new building in Fore Street. This was opened for worship on August 6th, of the same year, when the Rev. Mr. Ward, of Stowmarket, preached in the morning, and the Rev. E. Hickman, of Denton, in the afternoon, and the Rev. F. A. Cox, of Hackney, in the evening. Mr. Stow resigned in 1825, and removed to Buntingford, Herts, and Halstead, Essex, after which he removed, not to Canada, as Mr. Browne says, but to Australia.

It is worthy of more than passing interest, at this juncture, to note the influence Suffolk Congregationalism has exerted, not only upon the religious life of the county, but upon lands far distant. Thomas Quanton Stow is a case in point. Born at Hadleigh in 1801, trained at Gosport Academy, he was instrumental, as we have seen, in the building of the church at Framlingham. In 1836 the Colonial Missionary Society was formed, and Mr. Stow became its first duly recognised agent to Australia (the Colony of South Australia was founded in the same year); he thus stands out as the pioneer of Congregationalism in that important colony of the great Southern Commonwealth. He was solemnly set apart for this great mission at the Weigh House Chapel, London, and sailed, with

his wife, in the good ship "Hartley" on June 11th, 1837, and arrived in Glenily Bay on October 18th after a voyage of 139 days

A tent was erected on the banks of the Torrens River, which served as their first home, and as the first place of worship. At first eleven persons formed themselves into a church, and elected Mr. Stow as their minister. The church grew and prospered, and at the end of the first year the membership had increased to thirty-six. The first permanent building was a very humble structure of pine logs, and thatched with reeds. From such small beginnings Congregationalism has grown to be a great religious force in that distant land; but the name and influence of the Suffolk pioneer are still cherished in South Australia. Among the imposing and beautiful buildings that adorn the city of Adelaide, the fine Gothic structure in Flinders Street, known as "The Stow Memorial," occupies an important place. On the north wall of the church there is a handsome marble tablet, bearing the following inscription:—

"I.H.S.

In memory of

Thomas Quinton Stow,

The pastor of this church from its foundation,

On the 19th of December, 1837, till his

Resignation in September, 1856.

He was born at Hadleigh, Suffolk, July 7th, 1801, and died at Sydney on July 19th, 1862.

This building was raised by the public of South Australia during the pastorate of Mr.

Evans, in testimony of the work of his predecessor, who was trusted by all, for his Sincerity, honoured for his wisdom, respected for his talents, and beloved for his piety.

This tablet is erected in affectionate remembrance of the first minister of this the Mother Church of South Australia."

The next minister at Framlingham was the Rev. James Goodeve Miall, from Hoxton, who was ordained August 2nd, 1826; he resigned in April, 1832, and was afterwards at St. Neots, and then at Bradford. The Rev. Henry Hollis, from Cheshunt College, became pastor towards the close of 1834; resigned November, 1842, and removed to Long Melford. The Rev. S. A. Browning came from Felling, Durham, in 1843, and resigned in 1870. He was succeeded in 1871 by the Rev. C. E. Gordon Smith, from Tillingham, who removed to Coventry in 1875. The Rev. H. Goddard, from Heathfield, Sussex, came in

1876, and resigned in 1877; he was succeeded in 1878, by the Rev. Rowland Mark, from Walthamstow, who remained till 1887, when he removed to Puddletown Dorset. The next minister was Mr. A. Keen, of Rickingham, who settled here in January, 1888, and resigned in July, 1896 and removed to Sedburgh, Yorks. In December, 1897, Mr. H. A. Todd became pastor-Evangelist, and after passing the Congregational Union examination, was ordained in 1904; he removed to Stansfield in 1911. For a time the church was without a settled pastor. In October, 1912, Mr. Thomas, of New College, became student-pastor for a year, but declined the invitation of the church for an extended period. Invitations were given to the Rev. F. H. Hobbs and the Rev. Theophilus Devine, but both were declined.

In 1915, the Rev. Charles Waring, from Nottingham, was invited to the pastorate, which he accepted, and entered upon his ministry in December of that year. His recognition service was held in May, 1916, when Alderman J. H. Grimwade, of Ipswich, presided, and addresses were delivered by the Revs. T. J. Hosken, of Ipswich, County Secretary; W. J. Robins, of Wickham Market; T. Devine, of Ipswich; and others. Mr. Waring resigned in 1918.

STANSFIELD.

The cause here owes its origin to the indefatigable labours of the Rev. John Rutter, who became its first pastor. The story, as told by one who knew him, is interesting. Mr. and Mrs. Rutter, on their marriage, settled, for a time, at Wickhambrook, where they kept a small shop; here they came under the influence of the Rev. Stephen Johnson, minister of that church, and to his faithful preaching they attributed their conversion. In 1833 they removed to Stansfield, where Mr. Rutter had taken a farm. Desirous of improving his mind, and of gaining a larger knowledge of the Scriptures, Mr. Rutter paid frequent visits to the Rector of a neighbouring parish. It was through this good man's advice that Mr. Rutter began to call his neighbours together for prayer and the study of the Word, in his farm kitchen. So successful was this work that in a short time a chapel was built, and Mr. Rutter became its minister, being ordained in 1842. For thirteen years he carried on this work, without salary. But wiser than many, under similar circumstances, he insisted upon the church raising £50 per annum to support a lay evangelist to visit the villages around. As a result of this itinerant work three other chapels were built in the neighbourhood. In recognition of the great service he had rendered to the Cause of Christ in this district, his portrait in oils was publicly presented to him by the county, at a memorable meeting held at Stansfield. An engraving of this now hangs in the vestry of the Stansfield chapel. In 1871, full of years and honours, Mr. Rutter passed to his rest. His successor, the Rev. J. Souther, removed to Saxmundham in 1851; he was followed by the Rev. James Jenkins, who settled here in 1852. During Mr. Jenkins' ministry the old chapel, which had been enlarged three times, was taken down, and a more substantial and commodious building erected on the site. The foundation stone was laid in 1859, but before its completion Mr. Jenkins removed to Needham Market. He was succeeded by the Rev. D. W. Evans, who came from Birdbush, Wiltshire, in 1860, and removed to Harwich in 1873. The next minister was the Rev. E. J. Newton, who came from Wareham, in 1873. He is described as an outspoken preacher, who gave great offence to some of the members of his congregation, who withdrew from the church, the result being that, for a time, the cause declined. Mr. Newton resigned in 1876; he was succeeded by the Rev. George Hollier, from Sudbury, who came in 1877, who resigned in 1880, and

removed to Rendham. In 1880, the Rev. J. Wade settled here, but resigned in 1886, and removed to Harwich; he was succeeded by the Rev. Hampden Baylis Jones, the blind, but gifted son of the Rev. Eliezer Jones, of Tacket Street, Ipswich. Mr. Jones's ministry was a great success, many being attracted by his impressive recitation of the Scriptures and hymns, as well as by his lucid preaching; he resigned in 1890, and removed to New North Road, Barbican. The Rev. T. E. Dannerell, from Bristol Institute, followed in 1890, and was ordained in the same year; he resigned in 1892, and removed to Fowey, Cornwall. In 1896 the Rev. J. A. Foster accepted the pastorate, and remained for two years, when he removed to Boxford; he was succeeded by the Rev. J. F. Boucher, who came from Layer Breton, Essex, in 1898, and resigned in 1907. In his early years Mr. Boucher had been a lay preacher in connection with the Established Church, working in the East End of London, under the late Dr. Tait, the then Bishop of London, who frequently urged him to take Orders, but preferring the larger liberty of the Free Churches, he elected to become a Congregational minister; he was succeeded by the Rev. W. J. Chapell, who came from Brighton in 1907, and removed to Lavenham in 1910. The Rev. H. A. Todd, of Framlingham, followed in the same year, and is the present pastor.

WICKHAM MARKET.

The circumstances connected with the introduction of Congregationalism into Wickham Market were so remarkable that we feel bound to relate them at some length.

"The late Rev. John Thompson, Baptist minister at Grun-disburgh, had felt, with others, a desire to preach the gospel in the open air at Wickham Market, or in a house registered for that purpose. He attempted to carry his desire into effect, but a combination was formed to put him down, and the person whose house was first engaged felt obliged to retire from the enterprise, through terror. This coming to the knowledge of Mr. George Lamb, of Woodbridge, he joined Mr. Thompson, and threw himself into the conflict, and in conjunction with his friend, the late Mr. John Jarrold, afterwards of Norwich, engaged preachers for the sabbath, and accompanied them to the scene of interest. A house was purchased and rendered as convenient as possible, and regular service was established. Often were the windows and doors broken, and sometimes the attendants were injured; but the cause prospered in the face of the most determined opposition. The number of rioters varied from two thousand to sometimes more than five thousand persons; their shouts, aided by an Indian gong, cow's horns, old kettles, etc., assumed a most terrific character; and females were subjected to the most brutal insults.

"The rioters were incited by others who at first had not courage to come boldly into the contest; but afterwards, to encourage the multitude to deeds of violence, loaves of bread were given to them from waggons, and money was furnished to provide that drink by which their passions became still more infuriated. Many times were rioters brought before Magistrates, who refused to act, and thereby encouraged these wretched proceedings. The grand jury in the neighbourhood threw out a bill preferred against the rioters at the Quarter Sessions, and on February 11th, 1811, Mr. Garron, in the Court of King's Bench, applied for rules to shew why criminal informations should not be issued against twelve persons who had been engaged in the riots. At the ensuing Assizes the accused, apprehending the probability of their conviction, tendered their apologies, withdrew their pleas of Not Guilty, acknowledged their guilt on the Rolls of the Court, entered into their recognizances for their appearance to receive judgment whenever required, and for their immediate good behaviour, and pre-

sented the prosecution with two hundred guineas which were afterwards handed over to the Bible Society.

"The cost of the prosecution was more than £800, which was afterwards paid by the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty."*

The house was opened for Divine Worship July 21st, 1812, the Rev. Messrs. Smith, of Brentwood; Atkinson, of Ipswich; Hickman, of Wattisfield; Gunn, of Hadleigh; Cowell, of Ipswich; and Dennant, of Halesworth, taking part in the service. A substantial chapel was built, and opened December 26th, 1826, on which occasion the Revs. C. Atkinson, of Ipswich, and Joseph Herrick, of Colchester, were the preachers.

The first pastor of the church was the Rev. S. Laidler, from Bangalore, India; he came in 1829, and continued here ten years, during which he had many difficulties to contend with, on account of the violent opposition to the truth which was still manifest in the neighbourhood. He, however, made a firm stand, and had the names of the principal rioters (some of whom belonged to families of considerable social standing) publicly proclaimed by the town-crier, accompanied by an intimation that in the event of a recurrence of the disturbance, legal proceedings would be taken at once against the offenders. Mr. Laidler removed to Harleston, in Norfolk, August 1st, 1839, and was succeeded in 1840 by the Rev. James Cranbrook, from Highbury, who removed to Soham in 1842, in which year the Rev. Daniel Jones came, who resigned in 1851. In 1853 the Rev. Charles Goffe, from Canuden, undertook the pastorate, and removed to North Walsham in 1861. The Rev. Abraham Jackson came in 1863, and removed to Halesworth in 1869. He was succeeded in the same year by the Rev. James Deighton, from New Tabernacle, London, who removed to Lutterworth in 1874, and was succeeded by the Rev. R. E. Rose, of Southam, Warwickshire, who settled here in June, 1875, and resigned in May, 1878, having accepted a call from the church at East Bergholt. In April, 1880, the Rev. R. F. Bracey came from Wortwell, and was ordained shortly after his settlement; the following ministers took part in this interesting ceremony:—the Revs. George Barrett, B.A., of Norwich; John Browne, B.A., of Wrentham; William Scott, of Ipswich; H. Andrews, of Woodbridge; J. Calvert, of Beccles; A. A. Dowsett, of Halesworth; and others. Mr. Bracey resigned in October, 1885, having accepted the pastorate of the church at Driffild, Yorkshire. For more than a year the pastorate was vacant, when an invitation was given to the Rev. J. A. Waterworth, of Layer Breeton, who entered

*Evan. Mag. 1811 and 1812.

upon his ministry here at the close of 1886, and resigned in 1891, and went to Canada. He was succeeded by the Rev. G. Palmer Lewis, who came from Whittlesea in October, 1891, and resigned in 1893 to enter New College; he was succeeded by the Rev. Josiah Collyer, who came in June, 1895, and resigned June 21st, 1898. In November, 1900, the Rev. J. T. Dilling came from Stokenchurch, and resigned in July, 1902; he was succeeded by Mr. T. S. Toy, who began his ministry in September, 1902, and remained only a few months. In September, 1903, Mr. J. Clifford took up the work here and continued until March 1907, when he removed to Chelmsford. In June, 1908, the Rev. W. J. Robins came from Cockfield, and is still the honoured and trusted pastor.

In December, 1910, the centenary of the introduction of Non-conformity into Wickham Market was celebrated, and in 1915 the centenary of the formation of the church was held, when the chapel was partly re-seated and wholly renovated at a cost of £160.

CAVENDISH.

THE cause here owes its origin to the generous efforts of J. S. ful was the work that in 1843 it was found necessary to Garrett, Esq., who built a chapel in 1840; and so success-enlarge this building, and in 1858 a new and still larger chapel was erected on the same site. The church was formed in 1845, principally by members from Clare. For some time after the formation of the church the ordinances were administered by the Rev. S. L. Harris, of Clare. The first stated pastor of the church was the Rev. S. Harber, who came in 1855, and resigned in 1865, when he removed to Roydon; he was followed by the Rev. William Novelle, who came in 1866, and removed to Falkenham in 1868. The Rev. George Newbury, from Sudbury, settled here in 1868, and resigned in 1873, and removed to Hastings, where he died. The Rev. A. Balfour was asked to undertake the pastorate for one year, which he did, and removed in 1874 to Thetford. In June, 1875, the Rev. M. J. Totten, of Wortwell, entered upon the pastorate, and resigned in 1880, when he went to Canada. In the same year (1880) two small houses were purchased for £350, and converted into a manse, the amount being raised by subscriptions and a bazaar. In 1881, the Rev. T. J. Rattenden came from Oakhill, and resigned

in 1891, when he removed to Thetford, where he died. The next minister was the Rev. B. Baxter, who came from Stowmarket, and settled here in January, 1892, who resigned in 1898, having accepted an invitation to Brill.

During Mr. Baxter's ministry, the old manse being considered inconvenient, it was decided to build a new one; the land, half an acre in extent, was given by J. S. Garrett, Esq., on the high road, near the station, and on this site the present manse was erected at a cost of £312.

In May, 1899, the Rev. D. Lloyd Jones, from New Eltham, entered upon the pastorate, and for sixteen years maintained a ministry of rare power and culture. During Mr. Jones's ministry a new and commodious Lecture Hall, with two classrooms, and two rooms for the caretaker, was given by Miss Garrett to the trustees of the chapel—the building to be used as a day school, also as the Sunday School, and for any meetings or services for the Congregational Church. In 1906 it was found necessary to undertake extensive repairs to the chapel: a new inside roof, floor, and heating apparatus were put in, the chapel re-benched, and thoroughly renovated, at a cost of £320; the whole of this sum was raised and the chapel was re-opened free of debt, after being closed for six months. In 1915, owing to ill-health, Mr. Jones was compelled to resign his charge, much to the regret of the church and a large circle of friends.

In 1916 the Rev. T. G. Boyne, A.T.S., came from Lowestoft, and is still the minister.

BRANDESTON.

THE cause here owed its origin to the efforts of Mr. Gooch, a resident farmer, who opened his own house for services. The chapel was built in 1838, and was variously supplied. Messrs. Gooch, Breeze, Semple, Doxey, and Hines followed in succession. In 1851, Mr. Thomas Gooch, having come to reside within a short distance engaged to renew his pastoral charge, which he maintained till 1858. Mr. Reeve, from Ipswich, preached here till the end of 1863. The Rev. F. S. King then took the pastorate, which he held till Michaelmas, 1865, when he removed to Manningtree. The Rev. William Fox, from Oulton, came in 1866, and removed to Alderton in 1870. The Rev. Daniel Jones, of Petistree, formerly of Wickham Market,

undertook the charge in 1871, and resigned in 1875, owing to ill-health. During Mr. Jones' ministry the chapel was thoroughly renovated, and a gallery erected. In October, 1877, the Rev. G. Burgoyne came from Great Eversden, Cambs., and resigned soon after (no notice of his resignation appears in the Church Book). In 1881, by an unanimous vote of the church, Mr. Jones was again invited to the pastorate, which he accepted, and continued till 1886, when he retired; he was succeeded by Mr. Henry Freeman, who came from Needham Market, where he had acted as assistant to the Rev. J. Jenkins. On June 17th, 1888, the Jubilee of the church was celebrated. The services were conducted by the Revs. D. Jones and R. Reeve, former pastors. On the following Wednesday the services were continued: the Rev. A. A. Dowsett, of Ipswich, preaching, in the afternoon, to a crowded congregation; a public meeting was held in the evening, when the building was again crowded; Mr. J. H. Grimwade, of Ipswich, presided, and addresses were given by the Pastor, the Revs. E. Keen, of Framlingham, R. Reeve, R. Pool, Free Methodist; W. Hubbard, of Ipswich; E. Hollier, of Rendham. In 1889, after a very successful ministry, Mr. Freeman resigned, and was followed by Mr. G. Ingate, who came from Bungay in 1890, and resigned in 1894, to take up secular work at Beccles. In 1895 Mr. John Butterworth came from London, and for ten years maintained a useful and vigorous ministry, during which time a great number of young people was added to the church. In 1900 Mr. Butterworth was ordained, having passed the usual examinations required by the County Union. The friends taking part in this interesting service were Mr. W. F. Paul, of Ipswich, who presided; Revs. T. J. Hosken, T. A. Carritt, F. D. Humphreys, of Ipswich; and W. J. Jobbling, of Rendham. In 1905 Mr. Butterworth resigned much to the regret of his people, and removed to Boxford. For some time after Mr. Butterworth's removal the pulpit was supplied with lay preachers, chiefly from Ipswich. In 1906 Mr. Edwin Wooster, from London, undertook the charge, and resigned in 1908, and removed to Wells, Norfolk; he was succeeded by Mr. C. Powell, of Hastings. Mr. Powell had previously held a pastorate at Hundcn. Under his pastoral care the church at Brandeston enjoyed a period of great usefulness and prosperity. In 1911 Mr. Powell was ordained. In 1912 Mr. Powell accepted a call to Oughtybridge, Sheffield; he was succeeded by Mr. W. G. Lambert, who came from Guildford in 1913, and is the present minister.

LEISTON.

THE cause here was commenced in 1859, when a number of Congregationalists resident in the town hired a room known as "Biggs' Room," on the Aldburgh Road, and held services here for some time. This church grew out of a movement inaugurated by the County Union to carry the gospel into many of the neglected villages of the county, and to which many of our village causes owe their origin.

A church was formed at Leiston on June 10th, 1861, and the chapel was built in 1866.

In November, 1860, the Rev. W. Butcher came from Cratfield, and removed to Hundon in 1864. In February, 1865, the Rev. George Gladstone came from Soham; he died suddenly on November 15th, 1870. Mr. C. J. Reskelly came from Linton, in Cambridgeshire in 1871, and resigned the following year, to enter Cheshunt College; he was succeeded by the Rev. T. J. Kightley, who came from Wickhambrook, who removed in 1874 to Woodbridge. In 1875 the Rev. Samuel Gladstone, brother of a former pastor, came from Kirkham, Lancashire, and remained till 1879, when he removed to Alford in Lincolnshire. In 1880, the Rev. W. H. Bradford, from Hackney College, came, and removed to Needham Market in 1886; he was followed by the Rev. C. H. Tickner, from Nottingham College, who settled here in September, 1886, and resigned the following year. In September, 1888, the Rev. G. Bullivant came from Bury St. Edmund's, and resigned in 1892. The Rev. J. B. Jones, from New College, came in June, 1895, and removed in 1902 to Enfield Highway; he was succeeded by the Rev. George Hall, who came from Plaistow, and removed in 1909 to Congleton, Cheshire. During Mr. Hall's Ministry the chapel was renovated and re-seated at a cost of £350. In October, 1910, the Rev. W. J. R. Petherick, from Western College, entered upon the pastorate, and is still the trusted and honoured minister.

COCKFIELD.

THE church at Cockfield was originated by Mr. William Harwood, who first established a school, then a prayer meeting, and then a simple preaching service, which was kept up by supplies from Bury. About the year 1842 the chapel was built, and services were regularly conducted. In 1848, the Rev. J. C. Bodwell formed a branch church here in connexion with Northgate Street, Bury. Mr. Brook, of Bury, preached here from 1849 to 1854; Mr. Marsh till 1858; Mr. Nunn till 1866. Mr. Nunn's ministry was greatly blessed, so that, in 1860, it was found necessary to enlarge the chapel. In 1866 the Rev. H. Williams, from the Bristol Institute, accepted the pastorate, when the church was united with Thorpe and adopted by the County Union. In 1867 the manse, schoolroom, and stables were built. In 1868, by a vote of the Northgate Street Church, Cockfield was amicably separated from the parent church, and so became independent. Mr. Williams closed his ministry December, 1871, and removed to Boston, Lincolnshire. He was succeeded by the Rev. G. B. Scott, from Sunbury, Middlesex, who entered upon the pastorate in September, 1872, and died in August, 1875. The Rev. W. Fox, from Alderton, succeeded in November, 1875, and resigned in December, 1877, having accepted the pastorate of Wymondham, Norfolk. In July, 1878, the Rev. S. Harker, entered upon the pastorate, and resigned in 1884, removing to Fordham, Cambs. During his ministry several important alterations were carried out in the chapel buildings. The next minister was the Rev. G. Bawn, who came from Chester in 1884, but was compelled to resign through ill-health in September, 1886.

The Rev. A. J. King, from Bristol College, commenced his pastorate here in January, 1887, but owing to the serious illness of Mrs. King, who had been recommended to a milder climate, he accepted an invitation to the church at Fowey, Cornwall, and resigned the pastorate in November, 1888. The Rev. W. J. Robins, from Cart Bridge, Woking, a branch of the Guildford Church, accepted the pastorate in December, 1890; he was ordained in the following year. For seventeen years Mr. Robins maintained a useful and successful ministry in this place. During that time the schoolroom was enlarged and numbers were added to the church. Mr. Robins resigned in 1908, having accepted a call to Wickham Market; he was succeeded in 1909 by Mr. B. Binding, of Kingsdon, Somersetshire.

During his ministry Mr. Binding succeeded in passing the County Union examinations and was ordained February, 1913. Having accepted a call to the pastorate of Chapel End, Warwickshire, he closed his ministry in August, 1913. In July, 1914, the Rev. F. H. Hobbs, of Fulborne, Cambs., who had previously held the pastorate of Rendham, entered upon the pastorate and is the present paster.

There are village churches at Barrow and Mendlesham which have been partially sustained by the County Union, and are variously supplied; the former is now worked by a Colporteur, and the latter has been placed under Stowmarket.

HUNDON.

IN consequence of high church practices in this parish, a considerable number of the inhabitants seceded from the Establishment, and built a chapel in 1846. The Rev. James Smith, formerly of Yarmouth, became the first pastor of the church; he left in 1848, after which the church was long vacant. The Rev. William King came to the place in 1858, and removed to Hadleigh in 1864, when the Rev. William Butcher came from Leiston; he removed to Boxford in 1875. The Rev. A. Morrison settled here in April, 1876, and resigned November 9th, 1879; he was succeeded by the Rev. W. M. Hawkins, who laboured here for 19 years, worthily representing Nonconformity in the district and fighting sacerdotalism whenever or wherever its arrogant assumptions came into conflict with his avowed principles. Mr. Hawkins resigned in June, 1900, and retired to Nottingham, where he died in 1916. The next pastor was Mr. C. Powell, of Thurlow, who settled here in the autumn of 1900, and after a successful ministry he resigned in November, 1907, and removed to Hastings. In 1908 Mr. B. Farrington, from London, came as lay pastor, and resigned in April, 1913.

For some time Hundon had been the cause of some anxiety to the Executive of the County Union. It was felt that the work could be better done if the church were amalgamated with some neighbouring church. After protracted discussions it was resolved to ask the Rev. D. Lloyd Evans, of Cowlinge, to undertake the pastorate in conjunction with his own. This he readily consented to do, and entered upon the work in September, 1913. In 1914 the church buildings were thoroughly renovated at a cost of £114, which sum was raised by the end of the year. Mr. Evans is still the minister, and doing an excellent work in both churches.

HARTEST.

THE chapel here was opened in 1864, under the auspices of the County Union, and the Church was formed at the close of 1866. The Rev. J. P. Bake, B.A., was the first pastor, who removed to Stone in 1868; he was succeeded by the Rev. J. Ellis, who removed to Pinchbeck in 1871. The Rev. C. Slater, succeeded, who removed to America in 1873. For many years this station has been supplied by lay agents. For more than 20 years Mr. Poulson has supplied the pulpit with great acceptance to the people.

COWLINGE.

THE Congregational cause at Cowlinge owes its origin to Wickhambrook, who established preaching services in the village and gathered together the nucleus of a church; this was in the year 1818. The work thus commenced was taken up by Mr. Daniel Gifford, a neighbouring farmer, who not only took the pastoral oversight of the church, but conducted the public services gratuitously for fifty years. He was assisted in the last few years of his life by agents of the Suffolk Congregational Union. First came Mr. Watts, who only stayed six months; he was followed by Mr. James Barnet, who came in March, 1866, and, after the death of Mr. Gifford in 1871, took entire charge of the church. Mr. Barnet laboured successfully for over seven years, and then emigrated to America. He was followed by Mr. W. Parker, who only remained six months. In June, 1874, an invitation was extended to, and accepted by, Mr. John Morley, of Nottingham Institute. In addition to the work at Cowlinge Mr. Morley had, for a time, the oversight of Thurlow. After seven years of happy and successful ministry, in which he gained the esteem of all who knew him, he too emigrated to America. He was succeeded by Mr. Charles P. Way, who came from Chalvey Windsor, but who only remained one year and removed to Mendlesham. The next minister was the Rev. W. Peters, from Peterborough, who settled here in March, 1883. After nine years of active and strenuous work, he was stricken down with paralysis on Sunday, July 5th, 1891,

and died August 28th, 1894. In 1892 an unanimous invitation was given to the Rev. D. Lloyd Evans, of Carmarthen College. Mr. Evans is still the minister, and after more than a quarter of a century still lives in the esteem and affection of his people.

THURLOW.

As we have seen* the church at Thurlow owed its origin mainly to the devoted labours of the Rev. Stephen Johnson, of Wickhambrook. The chapel was built in 1835, and the church was formed in 1836. The Rev. W. Selbie was minister here for some time. The Rev. G. Hollier came in 1858, and for three years maintained a successful ministry, the congregation crowding the chapel; he removed to Sudbury in 1861, and was succeeded by Mr. Harber, who removed to Royden in 1866. Mr. Barnet came after him. For a time the church was worked in connexion with Trinity Chapel, Sudbury; after that it was attached to Hundon and worked by an evangelist from that place. At present it is under the supervision of the West End Church, Haverhill.

* See Wickhambrook.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

SUFFOLK NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY.

THE following lists appear to have been prepared by Dr. Evans in 1717 or 1718, and are interesting as shewing the number of churches existing at that time, and the denomination to which they reputedly belonged. There are corrections appended nearly to the time of Dr. Evans' death. The volume in which they are found is in Dr. Williams' Library.

Independents.

Ipswich. Benj. Glandfield; Thos. Milway, 1721, ob. 1724; Wm. Notcutt	800
Sudbury. Joseph Maultby to Rotherdam, 1719; John Foster, 1721; John Ford, from Wisbeach, 1729	
St. Edmund's Bury.† John Bert, ob. 1716; John Saunders, rem. 1727; Saville, 1727-8; T. Steward, 1725	
Beccles. Edmund Spencer	350
Woodbridge. Henry Ward	250
Bungay. Henry Robinson	150
Lavenham. Thos. Hall, rem. to London, 1719*	
Combs.‡ Thomas Prince.*	200
Palgrave. Henry Williamson.*	
Sweffling.§ Samuel Wiltshire.*	120
Bansfield Hall, near Newmarket. Richmond	150
Southwold. Jenking Lewis, rem. to London, 1719	400-50
Wrentham. Saml. Wright	400
Wickhambrook,|| near Woodbridge	150
Eye. Thomas Wilkes, of Walsham	100

* Indicates that the chapel received an allowance, not stated, from the fund in London.

† Thomas Steward was minister of the Presbyterian Chapel in Bury.

‡ Combs, the original of Stowmarket.

§ Sweffling, afterwards Rendham.

|| A mistake. Wickham Market is near Woodbridge, but no cause is known to have been there.

Presbyterian.

Ipswich.	Saml. Baxter ; Wm. Shephard, 1720, ob. 1724 ;	
	Sam. Say, 1724	800
Sudbury.	Josias Maultby, p., went to Rotterdam, 1719 ;	
	John Foster, i., 1721, ob. John Ford, 1729, from	
	Wisbeach	400
St. Edmund's Bury.	Sam. Bury, rem. to Bristol, 1720 .	
	Sam. Savage, rem. to London, 1718 ; Wright, rem.	
	to London, 1724	700
Clare.	6.5. Wm. Cook, ob. 1718 ; Robt. Franks, 1719,	
	rem. to Edmonton, 1720 ; Robt. Wilson	400
Nayland.	5. Henry Hurst	450
Hadleigh.	9.7. John Darby	250
Framlingham.	Sam. Lodge, ob. Richd. Chorley	300
Haverhill and Wenden.	Thos. Green	250
Lestoff (Lowestoft).	Sam. Say, rem. to Ipswich, 1724 ;	
	Geo. Whitwick, 1725	300-20
Needham.	5. John Meadows	300

(Extinct, 1760, re-opened by the Independents, W.W.)†

NOTE.—Ipswich, Bury and Framlingham now Unitarian.

Debenham.	Kervin Wright	250
Barfold.†	Rice, Williams.*	200
Walsham.	Danl. Wright, ob. 1729 (given up at his death)	400
Wrentham.	Austin Plumstead	350
Long Melford.	10.7. Wm. Jecton	150
Barton, near Mendlesham.	6.dix. Saml. Strawyer	100
Bergholt.	Ralph Williamson	150
Mildenhall.	Campion	150
Stowmarket.	7. Saml. Choyce	
Ixworth.	Lecture. 5.4. Carried on by several.	
Bildeston.	Lecture.	
Hitcham.	Lecture.	
Norton.	Lecture.	

Preaches occasionally, Thos. Wright, of Ipswich, p.

N.B.—The figures at the end of some of the lines indicate the number of hearers ; the second, as the 50 in the case of Southwold, indicates the number of county voters in the congregation.

† W.W., Walter Wilson.

† Bargold, Bergholt, named twice, and a discrepancy in the minister's name, Sir Bergholt.

CHAPTER II.

MINISTERS AND HOUSES LICENSED IN SUFFOLK.*

* This list is from the "License Book" in the Record Office. A, Anabaptist; B., Baptist; C., Congregational; I., Independent; P., Presbyterian; O.H., Own house.

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Minister.</i>	<i>House of</i>
Aldeborough		Henry Brown, P.
Ashfield	Austin Plumstead, I.	Thomas Buck
Assington		John Gurdon, P.
Battisford	Thomas Holborough, C.	O.H.
Beccles	Robert Otteway, I.	O.H.
"	Robert Otlie, I.	Thomas Plumstead
"		Edm. Artis
Bergholt, East	Richard More, P.	
"	Samuel Blackleder, P.	
"	Samuel Foanes, P.	
"		Robert Hall, P.
Brockford		Samuel Harvey
Bungay		Thomas Walcott, C & A
"		John Allen, C & A
"		Henry Lacey, B.
Bury	William Folkes, P.	John Clarke, P.
"		Dame Cook, C.
"	Thomas Lawson	Mary Cook
"	John Winbon, C.	"
"	Robert Asty, C.	Susan Adams
"		Samuel Moody
Clare		Giles Barnardiston
"		John Bridgman
"		Richard Cutts
"		William Barcham
Combs	Richard Jennings, P.	O.H.
Cookley	John Stronger, C.	John Wilde
"	Thomas Spatchet, C.	Lydia Woodward
Cowlinge	John Pindar, P.	John Collyer
Creeting	Samuel Spring, P.	Margaret Rozer
Creeting, West	Thomas James, P.	Thomas Weatherhouse

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Minister.</i>	<i>House of</i>
Denham	Robert Morley, c.	O.H.
Debenham	James King, I.	O.H.
"		Samuel Burnett
Dunwich	John Hurriou, c.	Mrs. Dinnington
"	Thomas Spatchet	
Eye	John Strowger, I.	James Harvey
"		Jos. Blissett
Framlingham	Austin Plumstead, I.	Ann Fenn
"		John Fenn
"		Charles Churchyard
Fressingfield	William Goulding, c.	Richard Sampson, c.
Gisleham	Edward Plough, I.	John Sudlove
"		Stephen Gaule, c.
Hadleigh	Owen Stockton, P.	John Smith, P.
Haverhill	Stephen Scandaret, P.	Joseph Adey
Haughley		Robert Hemson, P.
Hessett	William Goodrich, P.	O.H.
Heveningham	Jacob Votier	Widow Crane
Higham (Higgam)	James Jordain, P.	O.H.
"	Thomas Motle, P.	
Hopton		James Elsegood
Hundon		W. Lovett, P.
Hunston	James Walker, P.	Edmund Frost
Ipswich	Owen Stockton, c & P	Gray Friar's House
"	Henry Havers, P.	"
"	William Lloyd	O.H.
Kelshall (Kelsale)		Thomas Sheeres, I.
Kessingland	Edward Plough, I.	Richard Sendall
Knoddishall		Richard Rouse, P.
Laystoffe (Lowestoft)		William Rising
Metfield	John Strowger, c.	John Browne
Middleton	Edm. Whincop, M.A., c.	O.H.
Nayland	Thomas Walker	William Spring
Nedgin		Richard Cooper, P.
Needham Market	Samuel Spring, P.	} Margaret Rozer
	John Fairfax, P.	
Norton	Thomas Lawson	O.H.
Ousden	James Walker, P.	Mrs. Mozeley
"	J. (Gefferod) Jephoe, P.	"
Ovington	Francis Crow, P.	O.H.
Peasenhall	William Manning, c.	O.H.
"	John Manning, M.A., c.	O.H.

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Minister.</i>	<i>House of</i>
Rattlesden	John Starke, c.	John (George) Groome, c.
"	James Waller, p.	Edm. Frost
Reed	John Pindar, p.	Robert Sanfield
Rendham	Thomas Nuttall, p.	o.H.
Rickinghall		Elizabeth Rust, c.
Sibton	John Hurrior, c.	o.H. & Edm. Bellamy
Southwold		Joseph Ireland, p.
Spexhall	Jacob Votier, p.	Widow Craine
"	Jacob Votier, p.	Thomas Baker
"		Richard Whincop, c.
Stoke	Mr. Sherman, p.	House near Stoke
Stowmarket	John Meadows, p.	o.H. & Elizabeth Nelson
"		Jonathan Peake
Sudbury	Samuel Blower, c.	Barn of Robert Sewell, c.
"	William Folkes, p.	John Parish, p..
Sweffling		John Man
Syleham	John Starke, c.	Robert Smith, c.
Waldingfield Parva	Thomas Walker, p.	o.H.
Walsham-le-Willows	John Salkeld, p.	o.H.
"	John Wilkinson, p.	o.H.
Walpole	S. Manning, M.A., c.	o.H.
"	Thomas Folkerd, p.	o.H.
"	Saml. Manning, jun.	
Wattisfield	Thomas Benton, c.	Isaac Carter, p.
"		Samuel Baker, c.
Wesleton	Robert Smith, M.A., c.	Joseph Gilder
Weybread		Richard Brabon
Wickhambrook	Samuel Cradock, p.	o.H.
Winston	Henry Cuzens, c.	o.H.
Wingfield	John Starke, c.	o.H.
Woodbridge	Frederick Woodall, c.	Jonathan Basse
Wrentham	William Ames, p.	Meeting House
"	Augustine Plumstead, p.	
"	Austin Plumstead, i.	
Wyverstone	Henry Cuzens, c.	

CHAPTER III.

THE PETITION OF THE SUFFOLK MINISTERS.

BLOMFIELD, in his History of Norwich, gives a copy of a letter from the Speaker of the House of Commons to the Mayor and Aldermen of Norwich ; and as no doubt the same letter was sent, *mutatis mutandis*, to all other districts, we give it here. It is dated September 24th, 1645.

“ Gentlemen,

The Parliament being desirous above all things to establish truth and righteousness in these kingdoms, towards which a settlement of a Church government is very conducive, hath resolved to settle a Presbyterian Government in the kingdom. For the better effecting whereof, you are required, with the advice of godly ministers and others, to consider how the county of the City of Norwich may be most conveniently divided into classical Presbyteries, and what ministers and others are fit to be of each classis, and you are accordingly to make such divisions and nominations of persons for each classical Presbytery, which divisions and persons you are to certify to the House with all expedition.

W. LENTHALL, Speaker.”

In pursuance of this purpose, Suffolk was constituted an Ecclesiastical Province. It was divided in fourteen Precincts for Classical Presbyteries, and “ the names of the ministers and others nominated by the Committee of the said County, according to Master Speaker’s directions by letter,” were given, together “ with the names of the several committees of the County of Suffolk in their several divisions.” This document bears date November 5th, 1645, but was not issued till 1647, and it has appended to it an order for additions to the foregoing list,” at the Committee of Lords and Commons for judging of Scandall, February 18th, 1647.” But though all this was arranged, the plan was never carried into effect. It was not so easy a thing to rear a new church establishment on the ruins of the old one, and mercifully this was prevented.

The general feeling of the clergy of Suffolk at this time will be gathered from the following “petition of the ministers of the

County of Suffolk and Essex concerning Church Government. Presented to the Right Honourable the House of Peers on Friday, May 29th, 1646."

"The humble petition, etc., sheweth that your solemn League and Covenant, your great and glorious victories, the expectation of the reformed churches beyond the seas, the longing desire of our brethren of Scotland, the humble petitions of the Reverend Assembly and the great city of this kingdom, the pressing miseries of the orthodox and well affected ministers and people in the country, cry aloud to your honours for a settling of church Government according to the Word. From the want of this it is, Right Honourable, that the name of the Most High God is blasphemed, his precious truths corrupted, his word despised, his ministers discouraged, his ordinances vilified. Hence it is that Schism, Heresy, Ignorance, Prophaneness, and Atheism flow in upon us, Seducers multiply, grow daring and insolent, pernicious books poison many souls, piety and learning decay apace, very many congregations lie waste without Pastors, the Sacrament of Baptism by many neglected, and by many reiterated, the Lord's Supper generally dis-used or exceedingly prophaned, confusion and ruin threatening us in all quarters.

"In all humility, therefore, acknowledging your unwearied labours for the public good, your successful endeavours for saving this kingdom, your hopeful beginnings of a blessed reformation ; we, out of conscience and in tender regard to the glory of God and the salvation of our people, beseech your honours that a form of Church Government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches may with all possible speed be perfected and confirmed by your civil sanction ; that Schismatics, Heretics, seducing teachers, and soul-subverting books be effectually suppressed ; that further care may be had of ordination for a supply of able and orthodox ministers, and all good means used to make up the sad breaches in this our Sion. So shall the church of God be settled, your hands strengthened, the sacred covenant performed, our fears prevented, the judgment of God diverted.

And your petitioners shall ever pray, etc."

This was signed by 163 ministers in Suffolk, and by 139 in Essex. The Suffolk names are given below.

Their Lordships replied to the petitioners thus :

"The Lords are glad to find this zeal and care in the ministry of the Counties of Suffolk and Essex, for the preventing the

further increase of heresy and prophaneness, and for the promoting of growth in the power of godliness. The Lords desire you to continue still in your endeavours therein, and they will not be wanting to give you all encouragement. They have commanded me to give you thanks for your expressions of your good affections to the Parliament and this cause, and do assure you that they will improve their power for the suppressing of error, heresy, seducing teachers, and soul-subverting books, and likewise for the settling of Church Government according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches, to which they hold themselves obliged by their Solemn League and Covenant, and that their Lordships have appointed that their (qu. your) petition with this answer shall be printed and published.

JOHN BROWN, Cler. Parliamentorium."

Names of those who signed the Petition :

The names marked † are found in the Classical lists.

Alexander, John	†Candler, Matthias	Dodds, John
Allerton, Barthol.	†Cary, John	Dodd, John
†Allot, John	†Carter, Bezaleel	Dowell, Wm.
†Andrews, Robert,	†Catline, Jer., Sen.	Drake, John
Sen.	Catline, Jer., Jun.	Driver, Hugh
Andrews, Robert,	†Catlin, Zachary	Etcocks, Seth
Jun.	Cave, Tho.	Eyres, Edwd.
†Ashburne, John	†Chamberlin, Rich.	†Fairclough, Sam.
†Asty, Rob.	Chaplin, Andrew	†Fairfax, Benj.
Austen, Wm.	†Cock, George	Faucet, Rich.
Bacon, Jas.	†Cockrain, Wm.	Fell, Spencer
Barthelet, Anthy.	Chapman, Wm.	Fenton, Anthy
Basil, Isaac	†Chaplin, Abm.	Fincham, Wm.
†Batho, Tho.	†Clarke, John	†Forgon, John
†Bedell, Wm.	Cocksedge, John	Fowle, Thos.
†Blackerby, Rich.	Cooke, Robt.	Frost, John
†Boardman, Sam.	Cooper, John	†Fuller, John
Broadstreet, Sam.	Cotton, Nath.	Glancock, Christr.
Brasyer, Edwd.	Cowper, Hy.	Golding, Barth.
†Browne, Wm.	†Cradock, John	Goldson, John
Brownrigge, Matt.	Cropton, Wm.	†Gotty, Richard
Bridon, Hy.	†Crosby, Thos.	Grundy, Thos.
Brunning, John	Curtis, Thos.	†Hale, John
Burrell, Chrstr.	Davis, Rich.	†Harris, Robt.
Burrough, John	†Devereux, Robt.	Harrison, Chas.
†Cade, Rob.	†Douglas, Wm.	†Harrison, Isaac

Herdson, Joseph	Pindar, John	†Syer, John
†Hodgeskin, Wm.	†Powell, John	†Trebicke, John
†Howlett, Robt.	Prat, John	Thompson, Anth.
†Hudson, Sam.	Prat, John	†Thurleby, John
Hunne, Rich.	†Rainham, Paul	Turnbull, Geo.
Jackson, Simon	Randall, Joshua	Turnhill, Thos.
†Jacob, Philip	Raye, Clement	†Underwood, Robt.
Jennings, Richd.	†Redgrave, Wm.	Voice, Edwd.
†Jermy, Geo.	Rewse, Thos.	Votier, Jas.
Knapp, Saml.	Rewse, John	†Wall, John
†Lawrence, Math.	Riches, Thos.	†Walker, Thos.
†Leverton, Nich.	Rogers, Richd.	Wallace, John
†Lindsay, Patrick	†Sainthill, Peter	Ward, Richd.
Long John	†Salisbury, Ambr.	†Ward, Joseph
†Luddington, Theo.	Samways, Sam.	†Warren, Thos.
†Maile, Saml.	†Sayer, Robt.	Warren, Thos.
Marleton, John	†Searle, Henry	†Warren, Thos.
Mayer, John	Smart, Nathl.	Webb, Robert
Mead, Robert	†Sotheby, Thos.	†Weld, John
†Munning, Wm.	†Speed, Geo.	Westley, John
Neach, Richd.	†Spring, Sam., Sen.	Whiting, John
Nelson, Geo.	Spring, Sam., Jun.	†Wicks, Robt.
†Nuttall, Thos.	†Stansbye, Robert	Wilkinson, John
Olmsted, Richd.	†Stafford, Robert	Wilham, Isaac
Owen, John	Steffe, Robert	Willan, Edw.
Peake, Thos.	Sutton, Daniel	Witham, John
Peart, Chrstr.	Sutton, Samb.	†Wragge, Chrstr.
†Peirce, Sam.	†Swaine, John, Sen.	Wright, Abm.
Pickering, Wm.	†Swaine, John, Jun.	†Yonger, Hy.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CLASSICAL ASSEMBLY IN SUFFOLK.

BEFORE giving particulars of the constitution of the Suffolk "Classis" it may be interesting to the reader to give a brief account of this form of church government which prevailed over a large part of England in the latter part of the 17th Century.

On Sunday, July 1st, 1644, there met, for the first time, in Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster Abbey, that body known as "The Westminster Assembly of Divines." This assembly consisted of about one hundred and twenty "divines," and thirty laymen, capriciously called together from different counties of England by the majority of the two Houses of Parliament, in order to form a council for the nation on subjects pertaining to ecclesiastical affairs as might be submitted to them by the Parliament. The members of this body originally consisted of three sections—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents. The central section very largely preponderated in numbers, and the Episcopalians were speedily excluded, by being called on to take the Solemn League and Covenant; so that ultimately the Assembly consisted of Presbyterians and Independents.

The original Minutes of the Sessions of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, from August 1st, 1643, down to March 25th, 1652, are contained in three folio volumes in Dr. Williams' Library, London, and are in the handwriting of Adoniram Byfield, one of the scribes of the Assembly. The works that the Sessions of this Assembly incubated were "The Directory of Public Worship," "The Confession of Faith," "The Form of Presbyterian Church Government," and the longer and shorter catechisms. These were all agreed upon and set forth by the authority of the Assembly, but that relating to Church Government was not formally ratified by Parliament. The Presbytery, according to the Westminster Assembly, was controlled by three grades of officials:—(1) Ministers who preached and ruled; (2) lay elders, who ruled but did not preach; and (3) deacons who ministered to the temporal necessities of the poor.

Next to the Congregational or Parish Presbytery, described above, and superior to it, was the Classical Assembly, which was formed of the delegates from the different parochial presbyteries within a

certain area. The delegates were not to be more than four and not less than two elders from each congregation, in addition to the minister. The business of the Classical Assembly, or "Classis," as it was more usually termed, may be thus summarized :—

- (a) To take cognizance of the conduct of ministers and elders.
- (b) To admit candidates to office.
- (c) To inquire into the state of congregations.
- (d) To decide cases too difficult for settlement by the parochial elders, or from which there was an appeal.
- (e) To discharge such other legislative functions as did not clash with the authority of the higher courts.

The Provincial Synod was the next superior court. It consisted of delegates from the different Classical Assemblies. This corresponded, in some measure, to our County Union. Appeals from the decisions of the Classis could in certain instances be carried there, and it adjudicated on matters involving the welfare or regulation of the whole province or county. The power of examination and ordination of candidates for the ministry was distinctly conferred, by a Parliamentary Ordinance of 1646, on each Classis, and many of them regularly exercised the right.

As already suggested above, this form of church government probably prevailed over a large part of England ; copies of minute books of such gatherings in different parts of the country, and in some instances, such as London, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Wirksworth, in Derbyshire, the original minute books are still extant. In this movement, Suffolk had a place, as the following will show :

Nov. 5th, 1645. The County of Suffolk divided into Fourteene Precincts for Classical Presbetyries, together with the names of the ministers and others nominated by the Committee of the said County, according to Master Speakers Direction by Letters. With the names of the severall Committees of the County of Suffolk in their Severall Divisions.

London : Printed for Christopher Meredith, at the Crane in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1647.

The names of the Severall Committees for the County of Suffolke in their Severall Divisions. Nov. 5th, 1645.

The first division containing the Hundred of Samford with the town of Polstead. Their meeting appointed at East Bergholt.

Sir Philip Parker
 John Gurdon, Esquier
 William Gage, Esquier
 Thomas Blossse, Esquier

Ministers.

Mr. Joseph Clifford, of Belstead
 Mr. Robert Wicks, of Ewarton
 Mr. Gilbert Coxe, of Washbrook
 Mr. Samuel Hudson, of Capel
 Mr. John Trebick, of E. Bergholt
 Mr. Robert Asty, of Stratford
 Mr. Thomas Warren, of Polstead
 Mr. Bazaleel Carter, of Woolverstone

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Charles Uneasy, Gent., of Hintlesham
 Lionell Bacon, Gent., of Heigham
 Capt. R. Gooding, Gent., of Wherstead
 Capt. John Goff, of E. Bergholt
 Daniel Wall, of Stratford
 Rhodes Hayward, of E. Bergholt
 John Layman, Sen., of E. Bergholt
 Richard Partridge, of Bentley
 Sam Dale, of Burstall
 Christopher Hayward, of Freston
 Christoph. Hayward, of Woolverstone
 Tho. Lumley, of Raydon
 John Stevens, of Stratford
 James Hayward, of E. Bergholt
 John Trenham, of E. Bergholt
 John Pope, of E. Bergholt

The Second Division, containing the Towne of Ipswich and the liberties and the Hundreds of Colneis and Culford. Their meeting appointed at Ipswich.

William Bloyse, Esquier
 Nathaniel Bacon, Esquier

The Bayliffes for the time being of Ipswich.

John Brandlyn, Esquier
 Peter Fisher
 Robert Duncon

Ministers.

Mr. Matthew Lawrence		
Mr. John Ward		
Mr. Robert Stansby	}	of Ipswich
Mr. John Fuller		
Mr. Nicholas Stanton		
Mr. John Harrison, of Trimleys		
Mr. Thomas Warren, of Witnesham		

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

John Clynch, of Culpho, Esquier
 Tho. Atherall, of Burgh, Esquier
 Capt. Daniel Clynch, of Burgh
 Ellis Jessup, of Grundisburgh.

Joseph Pemberton	}	of Ipswich
Mannuel Sorrell		
Richard Jennings		
Jacob Caley		
Henry Parkhurst		
Tho. Browne		
Christopher Glasscock		
Benjamin Wade		
Isaac Day, Sen.		
William Harvey, sen.		

The Third Division containing the Hundred of Loes, Wilford, and Tredling. Their meeting appointed at Wickham Market.

John Cotton, Esquier
 John Hodges, Esquier

Ministers.

Mr. Robert Cade, of Woodbridge.
 Mr. Charles Nickolets, of Winston
 Mr. Richard Goulty, of Framlingham
 Mr. Robert Sayer, of Cretingham
 Mr. Patrick Lindsay, of Earl Soham
 Mr. W. Redgrave, of Rendlesham
 Mr. John Gyles, of Debenham

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Tho. Redgrave, of Woodbridge, Gent.
 Gregory Nicholls, of Dallinghoe
 Edward Hammond, of Ufford
 Robert Smith, of Wickham, Gent.
 Capt. Richard Turner, of Wickham
 John Harrison, of Alderton
 Oliver Stebbing, of Earl Soham
 Henry Stebbing, of Brandeston, Gent.
 John Lovell, of Debenham
 Henry Blumfield, of Debenham
 Isaac Woodcoke, of Framlingham
 John Bond, of Ashfield
 George Reede, of Sutton
 John Smith, of Framlingham

The Fourth Division containing the Hundred of Plomesgate, with the Corporation of Aldeburgh and Orford, with the parishes of Theberton, Knoddishall, Middleton, Forley, Leiston, and Aldringham cum Thorpe in Blything Hundred, and Kelshall and Carlton in Hoxon Hundred. Their meeting appointed at Saxmundham.

Alexander Bence, Esquier
Squire Bence, Esquier
Thomas Bacon, Esquier
John Bose, Gent.

Ministers.

Mr. Thomas Nuttall, of Saxmundham.
Mr. John Swayne, of Cransford
Mr. William Powell, of Rendham
Mr. George Jarmy, of Knoddishall
Mr. Samuel Pearce, of Kelshall
Mr. Thomas Bathoe, of Leiston
Mr. John Thirlby, of Orford
Mr. — Searles, of Aldeburgh

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Capt. Thomas Johnson, of Aldeburgh
Capt. Hervey Cheney, of Aldeburgh
Tho. Edgar, of North Glemham, Gent.
Thomas French, of Knoddishall
Edward Pratt, of Freston
William Mace of Cransford
Richard Crow, of Kelshall
John King, of Farnham
Nathan. Flowerdew, of Farnham
John Mannock, of Saxmundham
William French, of Kelshall
Capt. Edmund Bence, of Benhall
Robert Mann, of Rendham
Tho. Grimsby, of Benhall
John White, of Benhall
William Aldus, Sen., of Saxmundham

The Fifth Division, containing the Hundred of Blything with the Corporations of Dunwich and Southwold, excepting the townes of Blything Hundred in the Fourth Division. Their meeting appointed at Halesworth.

Sir Robert Brook, Knight
 Sir John Rouse, Knight
 John Brooke, Esquier
 William Hevingham, Esquier
 Robert Brewster, Esquier
 Francis Brewster, Esquier

Ministers.

Mr John Phillip, of Wrentham
 Mr. Benjamin Fairfax, of Romborough
 Mr. William Cockrayne, of Westhall
 Mr. Nicholas Leverton, of Hevingham
 Mr. William Douglas, of Yoxford
 Mr. Henry Young, of Blythburgh
 Mr. — Wood, of Henstead
 Mr. — Browne, of Dunwich

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Anthony Baker, of Wrentham
 Thomas Hath, of Wrentham
 James Keeble, of Halesworth
 Francis Vernon, of Linstead
 William Knights, of Chediston
 William Bird, of Dunwich
 James Harvey, of Wissett
 Hoystens Wilkinson, of Linstead
 Thomas Reeve, of Walpole
 Christopher Berry, of Wesleton
 Thomas Crowfoot, of Uggeshall
 Gualter Strowger, of Chediston
 Nicholas Veasey, of Yoxford
 ——— Barker, of Sibton, Esquier
 Richard Thompson, of Romborough
 William Smith, of Yoxford

The Sixth Division containeth the the Hundred of Wangford, Mutford, and Lothingland. Their meeting appointed at Beccles.

Sir Batts Bacon, Knight
 Sir William Playters, Knight
 Sir John Wentworth, Knight
 Theophilus Vaughan, Esquier
 Edward Reed, Esquier

Ministers.

Mr. W. Hodgeskin, of Rushmere
 Mr. George Cock, of Barsham
 Mr. Edmund Barber, of Somerleyton
 Mr. James Aldrich, of Bradwell
 Mr. John Clarke, of Beccles
 Mr. John Allen, of Mettingham

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Humphrey Brewster, of North Cove, Gent.
 William Smith, of All Saints
 Benjamin Staygart, of Gorleston
 Samuel Newton, of Michael's
 Richard Battley, of Andrew's
 Edmund Neville, of Beccles
 Earherd, of Barsham, Gent.
 Samuel Cock, of Barsham
 William Ricks, of Michael's
 Richard Page, of Redisham
 Francis Aldrich, of Somerleyton
 Edmond Harvey, of Gisleham, Gent.

The Seventh Division containing the Hundreds of Bosmere and Claydon and Stow. Their place of meeting appointed at Coddendam.

Sir Roger North, Knight
 Thomas Terrill, Esquier
 Francis Bacon, Esquier

Ministers.

Mr. Thomas Young, of Stowmarket
 Mr. Thos. Sotheby, of Combs
 Mr. Samuel Spring, of Creeting.
 Mr. John Penn, of Newton
 Mr. Jeremy Catlyn of Burgham
 Mr. Matthias Candler, of Coddendam
 Mr. John Swayne, of Stonham Aspal
 Mr. Samuel Bathe, of Hemingstone.
 Mr. Henry Cooper, of Earl Stonham.

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

James Tervill, of Chipping, Esquier
 Capt. George Sparling, of Needham
 Richard Girling, of Coddendam

Barnaby Gibson, of Little Stonham
 John Smith, of Hemingstone
 Edmund Blandfield, of Stonham Aspal
 John Hayward, of Stowmarket
 John Revel, of West Creting
 John Goslyn, of Earl Stonham
 William Richardson, of Creting
 Thomas Rewse, of Creting
 Edward Clough, of Combs
 Edmund Mayhoe, of Gosbeck
 Tho. Dey, ibid, Gent.
 Edmond Dove, of Coddendam, Gent.
 Francis Blowers, of Blackenham Parva

The Eighth Division containeth the Hundred of Hoxon, except Kelshall and Carlton. Their meeting appointed at Stradbroke.

Nicholas Bacon, Esquire
 Henry North, Esquire
 Tho. Baker, Esquire

Ministers.

Mr. Richard Holmstead, of Dennington
 Mr. Thomas Crosby, of Laxfield
 Mr. Joseph Ward, of Badingham
 Mr. John Ashburne, of Monk Soham
 Mr. Francis Herdson, of Wilby
 Paul, Raynham, of Bedfield

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

George Borrett, Senr., of Stradbroke
 Capt. John Baxter, of Mendham
 John Tuthill, of Weybread
 Samuel Lawrence, of Syleham
 Capt. Anthony Barry, of Syleham
 Samuel Bancroft, of Monk Soham
 John Jeffery, of Tannington
 John Smith, of Dennington
 Thomas Hart, of Syleham
 John Borrett, of Laxfield
 John Herring, of Dennington
 Robert Bacon, of Monk Soham

The Ninth Division containing the Hundred of Hartismere. Their meeting appointed at Eye.

Sir Edmund Bacon, Knight and Baronet
 Wiseman Brakenham, Esquire
 Edward Harvey, Esquire

Ministers.

Mr. R. Chamberlaine, of Rickinghall Super
 Mr. Christopher Wragg, of Mendlesham
 Mr. Abraham Chaplayne, of Wetheringsett
 Mr. Robert Andrews, of Wyverstone
 Mr. Richard Proud, of Thrandeston
 Mr. John Symonds, of Gislingham
 Mr. Robert Harris, of Mellis
 Mr. John Forgan, of Occold

Others to be joined to the Ministers.

James Harvey, of Eye, Esquire
 John Gray, of Thrandeston, Gent.
 Capt. Will Seaman, of Mendlesham
 John Rivett, of Rishangles, Gent.
 John Grocer, of Westhorpe
 Thomas Rust, of Rickinghall, Super
 John Rust, of Wortham
 John Kerr, of Burgates
 Samuel Flowerden, of Eye
 William Freeman, of Gislingham
 Barnaby Barker, of Mendlesham
 Thomas Folkard, of Mendlesham
 Thomas Hubbard, of Oakley
 William Hunting, of Thrandeston
 Robert Savage, of Wetheringsett
 Edward Baldry, of Wyverstone

The Tenth Division containing the Hundred of Blackborne.
 Their meeting appointed at Ixworth.

Maurice Batrow, Esquire
 Sir Symonds Drury

Ministers.

Mr. Phillip Jacob, of Rickinghall Junior.
 Mr. Robert Howlett, of Hinderclay
 Mr. Clement Ray, of Wattisfield
 Mr. John Legate, of Barnham
 Mr. George Speede, of Stowlangtoft
 Mr. Mount, of Norton

Others to be added to the Ministers.

John Osborne, Gent., of Wattisfield
 Capt. Page, of Walsham
 Thomas Rampley, sen. of Walsham

Henry Rewse, of Fakenham
 Edmond Craske, of Bardwell
 Edward Cole, of Fakenham Magna
 Thomas Syer, of Langham
 William Barnes, of Elmswell
 Symon Smith, of Hunston
 John Amys, Junr., of Hunston

The Eleventh Division, containing the Hundred of Thingoe, Lackford, and Thedwastre, with the Corporation of Bury. Their meeting appointed at Bury.

Sir William Spring, Baronet.
 Robert Reynolds, Esquire
 Richard Pepys, Esquire
 Gibson Lucas, Gent.
 Samuel Moody, Gent.
 Thomas Chaplin, Gent.
 Thomas Gyps, Gent.
 The Alderman, for the time being, of Bury.

Ministers.

Mr. John Wall, of Bury
 Mr. Peter Sainthill, of Bury
 Mr. John Clegates, of Bury
 Mr. John Hale, of Mildenhall
 Mr. Ambrose Salisbury, of Whepstead
 Mr. Edward Write, of Pakenham
 Mr. John Cradock, of Barrow
 Mr. Zachary Catlin, of Harston
 Mr. ——— Downes, of Brockley

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Dr. Jasp. Despotine, of Bury
 John Clerk, of Bury
 Myles Burrough, of Bury
 Nathaniel Cracke, of Bury
 William Fisk, sen., of Pakenham
 John Fisk, of Rattlesden
 Henry Bright, of Pakenham
 John Sparrow, of Rede
 Samuel Sparrow, of Depden
 Anthony Sparrow, of Rede
 Gregory Forgan, of Rattlesden
 Olofernes Cook, of Eriswell

Thomas Wells, of Risby
 Thomas Sage, of Horringer
 John Sage, of Walsham

The Twelfth Division, containing the Hundred of Cosford, with the parishes of Monks Eleigh, Preston, and Milden, of Babergh Hundred. Their place of meeting appointed at Bildeston.

Ministers.

Mr. John Browning, of Semer
 Mr. Samuel Maile, of Monks Eleigh
 Mr. William Munning, of Preston
 Mr. Isaac Harrison, of Hadleigh
 Mr. John Wield, of Bildeston
 Mr. Miles Burkit, of Hitcham

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Mr. William Richardson, of Hadleigh, Gent.
 Capt. Thomas Alabaster, *ibid*
 John Hudson, *ibid*
 Thomas Gates, *ibid*
 Richard Tilson, *ibid*
 James Abbott, *ibid*
 Will. Bloomfield, of Bildeston, Esq.
 — Markham, of Semer
 William Chaplin, of Hitcham
 Nathaniel Lovekin, *ibid*
 William Cooke, of Kersey
 George Day, of Monks Eleigh

The Thirteenth Division containing the Hundred of Babergh, with the Corporation of Sudbury, except Monks Eleigh, Preston, Milden, and Polstead. Their place of meeting appointed at Lavenham.

Isaac Appleton, Esquire
 Brampton Gurdon, Sen., Esquire
 Brampton Gurdon, Jun., Esquire.

Ministers.

Mr. Thomas Molt, of Stoke-Nayland
 Mr. Thomas Walker, of Assington
 Mr. Thornbeck, of Bures
 Mr. William Leigh, of Croton
 Mr. Francis Quarles, of Newton

Mr. William Gurnall, of Lavenham
 Mr. R. Petchy, of Waldringfield Mag.
 Mr. Seth Wood, of Melford
 Mr. Daniel Sutton, of Cavendish
 Mr. John Smith, of Cockfield

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

Mr. Goodyard, of Lavenham
 Henry Copping, Sen., *ibid*
 John Mead, Sen., of Sudbury
 Col. John Hothergill, *ibid*
 Joseph Brand, Esq., of Edwarth
 William Abbott, of Sudbury
 John Pannell, Jun., of Sudbury
 John Cole, of Sudbury
 John Kent, of Nayland
 Isaac Keyes, of Nayland
 Edward Gerrard, *ibid*
 Thomas Winterton, *ibid*
 Robert Allen, of Assington
 Thomas Gibson, of Sudbury
 Francis Long, *ibid*
 Roger Brown, of Boxford
 Thomas Hubbard, of Melford
 John Gerrard, of Bures
 Robert Kerrington, of Newton
 Roger Kerrington, of Acton

The Fourteenth Division containing the Hundred of Risbridge.
 Their meeting place appointed at Clare.

Sir Nathan Barnardiston, Knt.
 Sir William Soham, Knt.
 Sir Thomas Barnardiston, Knt.
 Henry North, Jun., Esquire
 Thomas Cole, Esquire

Ministers.

Mr. Richard Blackerby, of Thurlow Magna
 Mr. Sam. Fairclough, of Kedington
 Mr. John Allot, of Thurlow Parva
 Mr. Roger Cook, of Clare
 Mr. Sam. Boardman, of Stansfield
 Mr. Barth Adrian, of Bradley Magna

Others to be joyned to the Ministers.

John Soam, of Bradley Parva
Major Westhrop, of Hundon
Capt. Samuel Ward, *ibid*
Edmund Phillips, of Clare
Mr. Harrence, of Haverhill
John Ray, of Denstone
George Moody, of Moulton
Robert French of Keddington
Phil Sparrowe, of Wickhambrook
—— Browne, of Ousden
Nich. Tweed, of Stoke

These several Divisions and persons are approved to be for
Classical Presbyteries within the County of Suffolk.

April 19th, 1647.

Manchester.

CHAPTER V.

MINISTERS EJECTED OR SILENCED IN SUFFOLK.

OUR glorious first Reformers in England chose the bitterest sufferings, and most cruel death; and the Bartholomew divines, the Fathers of the Dissenting Cause, resigned all their livings and cast themselves entirely upon Providence, rather than violate conscience, or sin against God. Let my soul be for ever with the souls of these men."*

Ash	..	..	Thomas Waterhouse, P.
Akenham	..	..	Thomas Holborough, jun. Conformed
Assington	..	..	Thomas Walker, M.A.†

†Born at Lynn; educated at the Grammar School there, then at Emmanuel College, Cambridge; assistant to Mr. Bridge at Norwich till 1636, when he was presented to Assington. He signed the Suffolk Petition, and was ejected in 1662. His successor was inducted October 26th, 1664, *per ejectionem amocoem vel non subscript. ult. incumb. jam vacam.* He had a wife and nine children, who were afterwards comfortably provided for. In 1672, he was licensed as a Presbyterian teacher in his own house at Little Waldringfield. Nathaniel Rogers, who was rector of Assington before him, went into New England; he married Margaret Crane (Candler's MSS., p. 467). Henry Jessey resided at Assington Hall with Brampton Gurdon, Esq., from 1624 to 1633. The Hall was licensed as a preaching place in 1672. Candler's MSS., p. 467; Non-Con. Memorial, 1, 108; or License Book.

Barking	..	..	John Fairfax, P.
Barnardiston	..	..	John Woods, P.

Samuel Fairclough was instituted to this living June 20th, 1623; Joh'es Westley, March 17th, 1629; and John Woods, July 20th, 1649.

Barham	..	..	Jer. Catlin, conformed
Battisford	..	..	Thomas Holborough, sen., P.

A very honest, plain, practical preacher. He wrote a commendatory epistle to the sermons of Mr. Blackerby, of Stowmarket, on whose ministry he often attended.

* Dr. John Taylor, formerly of Norwich. "Scripture account of prayer."

Beccles	..	..	John Clarke, P.
"		..	Robert Ottee, P.
Bildeston	..	..	John Weld, P.
Blithborough	..	..	Robert Smith, M.A., P.
Bradley Great	..	..	Barthol. Adrian, P
Brampton	..	..	Thomas Bathoe

When he, Bathoe, signed the Petition he was minister at Leiston. His successor at Brampton was inducted December 3rd, 1662, *per amotionem, incapacitatem sive deprivatoem* Thomas Bathe, *Cl'ici ulti. Rectis sive Inc. ibm.*

Brandeston	John Forbee
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One of remarkable moderation.

Bricet	(Ofton)
Brightwell	Robert Mercer, P.
Bungay	Samuel Malbon, P.
"	..	..	Zeph. Smith, P.
Bury	..	..	Nich. Claget, M.A., P.
"	..	..	Samuel Slater, P.
"	..	..	Thomas Taylor, P.
Capel	..	..	Samuel Hudson, Conformed

Candler says that John Hudson, rector of Capel, an eminent preacher, married Mary, daughter of John Rogers, the famous preacher at Dedham. His second wife was Thomasine, daughter of — Caley, of Waldringfield, whose mother had the second time been married to — Sands, the famous preacher in Boxford, in Suffolk. Their daughter, Thomasine, married Edward Dury, Vicar of Rendham. Mr. Hudson's widow, Thomasine, married John Base, lord and patron of Saxmundham (MSS.). Samuel Hudson published a work on "The Essence and Unity of the Catholic Church." 1650, dedicated to the Assembly of Divines.

Chelmondiston			John Sanders
Claydon	..	..	Mr. Collett
Coddingham	..	..	Matthias Candler, sen.

Of Cambridge University, was instituted December 16th, 1629, was an excellent preacher, and an early sufferer for Nonconformity under Bishop Wren. His "peculiar study and diversion was heraldry," and we have frequently quoted from his MSS, which have been preserved in the British Museum and at Oxford. He died early in 1663.

Combs	..	..	Richard Jennings, P.
Cransford	..	..	Henry King
Creeting St. Mary			Samuel Spring, P.
„ St. Peter			George Havill, conformed

On April 23rd, 1663, the living was vacant *per non-subscripcoem Georgii Havill Clici.*

Denham	..	..	Ed. Thomas, M.A.
Debenham	..	..	John King, P.
Dunwich	..	..	Thomas Spatchet, P.
Euston	..	..	William Short
Eye	..	..	Edward Barker, P.
Framlingham	..	..	Henry Sampson, M.D., P.
Frostenden	..	..	John Strowger, P.
Gosbeck	..	..	Thomas Daines
Hadleigh	..	..	Isaac Harrison, D.D., conformed, P.
Halesworth	..	..	(Holton)
Haverhill	..	..	Steph. Scanderet, M.A., P.
Hemingstone	..	..	Tobias Leg, M.A., P.
Henstead	..	..	(Rushmere).
Hessett	..	..	Andrew Chaplyn

Mr. Chaplyn signed the Petition. The living was vacant January 27th, 1662-3.

Heveningham	..	..	James Votier, P.
„			George Jones, conformed

Ejected from a village in Hampshire ; “ died rector of Hevingham,” after having been for some years a Nonconformist. N. Parkhurst, of Yoxford, preached a funeral sermon for him. Noncon. Memorial).

Hinderclay	..	..	Robert Howlett
Hintlesham (or Stratford)			Daniel Wall
Holton	..	..	Mr. Swayne, P.

Was instituted to Halesworth, adjoining Holton, June 24th, 1651. Two persons, each named John Swaine, signed the Petition in 1656, one at Cransford, the other of Stonham Aspal ; but which of these or whether either of them, afterwards came to Holton, is not known

Honington	..	..	John Page, P.
Hundon	..	..	Francis Crow, P.
Hunston	..	..	James Waller, P.

Of Cambridge University. After his ejection, though debarred of residence with his people, he ordinarily visited them

every week. In 1672 he was licensed to be a Presbyterian Teacher in the house of Edmund Frost here, and also at Mrs. Mozeley's house at Ousden. He died at his house at Rattlesden in March, 1697, and his funeral sermon was preached by John Fairfax in Hunston Church. Palmer and License Book.

Ilketshall St. Mary	John Strowger, P.
Ipswich St. Helen's	Robert Gouge, P.
Ipswich St. Clement's	Benj. Brunning, P.
Ipswich	Benj. Stoneham, P.
Ipswich St. Nicholas	Roger Young, conformed
Kedington . . .	Saml. Fairclough, sen., P.

Born April 24th, 1594 ; son of Lawrence Fairclough, of Haverhill. Mr. Ward, afterwards of Ipswich, was the means of his conversion. He was settled first as lecturer at Lynn, but, being troubled there by Bishop Harsnet, he removed to Clare ; he was then presented by Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston to the living of Barnardiston, and whilst there was brought into the High Commission Court, and impoverished by journeys and fees ; he was then presented by Sir Nathaniel to the living of Kedington (instituted February 10th, 1629), where he continued nearly thirty-five years. He was an exemplary and successful minister, but often troubled by citations to attend spiritual courts. He signed the Petition in 1646, but refused the engagement, and was ejected in 1662. His successor, John Tillotson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was inducted June 17th, 1663. Tillotson left Kedington before the end of 1664. The Oxford Act, which forced him from his people, grieved Mr. Fairclough more than the loss of his living. He then resided for five years with two of his sons and two of his sons-in-law, who had left their livings, and after that with his youngest son, a conforming minister at Kennet, in Cambridgeshire, and then with his daughters successively. He preached constantly, as opportunity presented itself, and died December 14th, 1677, aged 84. The Rev. J. Howe, in a funeral sermon for Richard Fairclough, the eldest son of Samuel, of Kedington, gives the father a very high character. A long account of him is given in *Clarke's lives*, and in *David's*, p. 609. Richard, his eldest son, was ejected from Mells, in Somersetshire, his first and only public station ; he was licensed in 1672 to be a general Presbyterian Teacher ; he was then living in Thames Street, London ; he died July 4th, 1682. His second son, Samuel, was ejected from Houghton Conquest, in Bedfordshire ; in 1672 he was licensed a Congregational Teacher at Chippenham, in Cambridgeshire ; he died December

31st, 1691, aged 66, and was buried at Heveningham; Mr. Parkhurst, of Yoxford, preached his funeral sermon. One daughter married Mr. George Jones (ser Heveningham); the other married Mr. Richard Shute, who succeeded Mr. Storer at Stowmarket. A John Fairclough died Rector of Carleton Forehoe, August 17th, 1730, aged 31.

Kettleburgh	..	Henry Stephens, P.
Leiston	..	Edm. Whincop, M.A., P.
Lidgate	..	Mr. Ward

Died in 1679, aged nearly 100. Possibly this was Mr. Richard Ward, who signed the Petition in 1646.

Melford	..	John Woods, P.
Middleton	..	William Manning, P.
Monks Eleigh	..	Samuel Maile

Signed the Petition.

Naughton	..	William Sparrow, conformed
Needham	..	Thomas James, P.
Newton Old	..	John Wilkinson, P.
Ofton	..	John Whiting,

Palmer was uncertain whence Mr. Whiting was ejected. He was instituted to Ofton and Bricet December 28th, 1638. His successor was appointed March 16th, 1660-1, *per resignationem Joh'is Whitinge cler. ult. incumb.*

Ousden	..	John Meadows, M.A., P.
Parham	..	John Wenburn, P.
Peasenhall	..	John Manning, PP.
Rendham	..	Mr. Davis
Reydon and Covehithe		Mr. Mayhew
Rishangles	..	No name
Romborough	..	Benj. Fairfax, P.
Rushmere	..	Thomas Spurdance, P.
Sancroft S. Elmham		Saml. Petto, PP.
Saxmundham	..	Thomas Nuttall

Instituted January 9th, 1615, married 1st, Hannah, daughter of John Whitehead, of Hunston, in Suffolk, and of Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. Turner, sometime Deane of Wells; she left no issue. Second (June 27th, 1637, at Westleton. Dairy) Alice, daughter of — Mosse, of Frostenden, and relict of Gilbert Corke, rector of Sotterby, who died without issue. Third Alice Reed, relict of William Bloomfield, of Stonham Aspal. Mr. Nuttall signed the Petition, in 1646. The living was vacant October 10th, 1662, *per cessionem aut deprivationem*

Tho. Nuttall. Ten years afterwards this vigorous old man was licensed as a Presbyterian Teacher at his house at Rendham, when he must have been eighty or more.

Sibton & Peasenhall Thos. Dawson, M.A.

Sometime fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. He was removed from Sandwich in October, 1660, upon pretence of a flaw in the title to his place. He had this living given him where there were two parishes united. The living was vacant 11th February, 1663-4, *per ejectionem vel amocoem* Thomas Dawson, *Cler. ult. inc.* etc. After several changes he removed to London, and in 1672 was licensed as a Presbyterian Teacher in his house in Spittlefields. He died in 1694.

Somerleyton Edmund Barber

Succeeded John Brinsley. Instituted March 17th, 1644.

Southwold Mr. Woodward, P.

Sproughton Joseph Waite, P.

Stansfield Mr. Ray, conformed

Stratford St. Mary Robert Asty

Stoke-by-Ipswich .. Edward Sherman

"A judicious, able preacher, but very modest." His successor was appointed January 3rd, 1662-3, *per deprivacoem Mri. Sherman ult. incumb. ibm. virtute nuperi Actus Parliament pro uniformitati sen alioquocunque modo jam vacam.* After his ejection he kept a school at Dedham till his death. But it appears that in 1672 he was licensed (— Sheerman) to be a Presbyterian Teacher "in a house near Stoke."

Stoke-by-Nayland .. Thomas Molt

"A very valuable man." His successor was appointed March 16th, 1662-3.

Stonham Earls .. Henry Cooper

Stowmarket .. John Storer, M.A., P.

Stradbroke John Stark, P.

Sudbury Wm. Folkes, PP.

" Mr. Crossman, conformed

Syleham Samuel Habbergham, P.

Thrandeston .. Richard Proud, P.

Trimley John Simson, P.

Walberswick .. Mr. Simonds, conformed, P.

Waldingfield Magna No name

No name given. The place is not mentioned in Palmer; but the successor of the victim was instituted December 9th, 1661.

Waldringfield Parva Mr. Deersley

Query. Was not Mr. Deersley ejected from Waldringfield ?
The house of John Dearsley, a Presbyterian Teacher, in St. Andrews, in Norwich, was licensed in 1672.

Waldringham .. T. Lupton, conformed

Walpole Samuel Manning, M.A., P.

Westhall Robert Franklin

Of Jesus College, Cambridge. Born in London, July 13th, 1630. His mother was sought as a nurse for the infant prince, afterwards Charles II., but his father refused the offer. He was educated first at Woodbridge, and then went to Cambridge at fifteen years of age. He was settled at Kirton in August, 1651, as the choice of the people, and with the approbation of the Committee of Plundered Ministers. He afterwards removed to Bramfield, then to Blithburgh. He was settled at Westhall in 1658 ; but in 1662 he says, " I left my living rather than defile my conscience by the then conformity." The living was vacant May 1st, 1663, *per cess. ult. rect.* He went to London where he was often in great straits. He was imprisoned in Aylesbury goal for preaching at Colebrook ; in 1684 he was again imprisoned for refusing the Corporation oath ; and again shortly after for the same offence. He and his wife suffered many indignities before King James' liberty was granted. Further particulars from his own manuscripts, and those of his wife, are given in Palmer in loc. The time of his death is not recorded.

Weybread .. Mr. Bayles

Whatfield Samuel Barklar, M.A., P.

Wilisham Nathaniel Fairfax, P.

„ John Fenwick, P.

Wingfield John Pindar, P.

Woodbridge .. Frederick Woodall, P.

„ .. Robert Cade

Worlington John Salkeld, P.

Wratling Magna .. Mark Mott

Wrentham (John Phillip), P.

„ Thomas King, P.

„ William Ames, P.

„ Aug. Plumstead, P.

Yaxley James Small

Yoxford Samuel Chapman

? Mr. Howell

? Mr. Ellis ; Mr. Harrold ; Mr. Voice

? John Fairclough, conformed



E. HERBERT FISON, ESQ., J.P., Stoke House, Ipswich.

Chairman of Suffolk Benevolent Society, 1880.

Chairman of Suffolk Congregational Union, 1882.

For 40 years the generous friend and helper of all the Ministers
of the county.



CHAPTER VI.

SUFFOLK CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

BEFORE Congregational Unions, as we know them, existed there was a virtual union among the churches of our own faith and order, not only in particular districts, but throughout the country. The basis of this was the mutual recognition of the equality of the churches and the absolute freedom of each. They instinctively felt that, in order to union, two things were necessary, viz., *confidence* and *sympathy*, that they should be able to trust each other, and that they should maintain similar opinions and usages; and the result was a greater unanimity in doctrine and a greater conformity in practice than could have been secured by any other means. In order that confidence might not be weakened, and sympathy destroyed, each church avoided whatever in its conduct might have a tendency to alienate and isolate, and whatever could give just cause of offence to the rest, and took fraternal counsel, with others, in all matters of common interest; the churches informed each other of their public proceedings, and gladly availed themselves of each other's assistance whenever it could be given.

No churches, under ordinary circumstances, were formed, and no ordinations or recognitions of ministers took place without the presence of elders and messengers of neighbouring churches "assisting and consenting."

We do not say that a church may not be formed under any circumstances without the consent and concurrence of neighbouring churches, or that it may not proceed to the public appointment of a pastor on its own sole responsibility; but we think that no judicious persons would do this except under the pressure of stern necessity; for such conduct says as plainly as possible, "We don't want sympathy, and we won't have advice." The effect of it naturally will be that they cannot unite with their neighbours (the conditions of union being wanting, viz., confidence and sympathy), and that they will not be recognised. In such cases the law of attraction does not operate, and the law of repulsion is in full activity. And yet, strange to say, when churches so originated and conducted feel the natural consequences of their own course they often complain that injustice is done them, and that they are hardly treated.

The Church Book at Yarmouth contains the following entries (1650) :—

“ February 4.—The saints in and about Albee desired help from us, and advice as to the matter of churchship, and our furtherance of them therein.”

“ April 8.—Another letter was received, and Mr. Bridge was desired to go over and help them, which accordingly was done.”

“ October 7.—Mr. Bridge gave the church an account concerning the proceedings of the saints at Albee about gathering into fellowship, and how he was satisfied concerning them, and so did Mr. Tillinghart, but did not give them the right hand of fellowship until he had acquainted the church (i.e., Yarmouth) with it, and they had voted their joint satisfaction ; whereupon the church declared that they would have fellowship with the church in Albee as a sister church.”

Again, in the matter of ordination, though a church freely selects its own pastor, yet elders of neighbouring churches should be concerned in the Ordination, “ as there is to be an intercourse between them afterwards in ecclesiastical transactions, resulting from the communion of churches.” In the Journal of the Rev. S. Wood, of Woodbridge, under date, May 20th, 1746, we find that at a meeting held at Wattisfield, for thanksgiving and prayer, Mr. Sowden, who was shortly afterwards ordained at Stowmarket, “ read to the ministers a confession of faith.” Thus he gave them satisfaction in regard to his principles, and they were able with a good conscience to assist in the solemnity afterwards. By means like these the spirit of union was fostered ; the churches felt that there was absolute agreement among them, and the ministers felt a personal sympathy with each other, and so the way was prepared for the more formal, organized union which followed.

In 1741, Dr. Doddridge met a considerable number of the ministers of Suffolk and Norfolk, at Denton, and unfolded before them a plan of association. This, together with the counsels and encouragements he gave them, strengthened the hands of those who, in an informal way, were at that time accustomed to meet for fraternal intercourse. In 1751 a regular Association was formed, of the proceedings of which minutes were kept for a considerable number of years. Ten years after various modifications were introduced into the Association, and “ they adopted all the regulations which Dr. Doddridge had originally proposed.”

Their intentions seem to have been to form a friendly council, whom certain churches in these counties might consult with confidence in their difficulties, and to cultivate a friendly correspondence

(and intercourse) between all the churches in the district. "There is however," says Mr. Harmer, "one lion in the way, and that is the extreme difficulty of keeping up such a constant correspondence with anything of accuracy and life, any longer than the pursuit of some interesting object furnishes materials for it."

Notwithstanding this the Suffolk Association continued to exist for many years. It must, however, in process of time, have ceased to exist, for on "November 5th, 1794, the Independent ministers of the county of Suffolk, held a meeting at Ipswich for the purpose of consulting each other upon the propriety of forming themselves into an Association for their mutual encouragement, and the better edification of their respective charges. See Evangelical Magazine, Vol. II., p. 573.

In 1798, at a meeting at Wrentham, a resolution was passed on the desirability and importance of preaching the Gospel in the country villages. In 1836, the Association assumed a more decidedly home missionary character, and resolved that "It is a solemn duty of every church to consider itself in its collective capacity a Missionary Society, responsible for the diffusion of the knowledge of the Redeemer, and the conversion of perishing souls; particularly considering that the destitute parishes within five, six, or seven miles have a direct and urgent claim upon it for Gospel instruction."

Of the Society thus modified, Thomas Prentice, Esq., of Stowmarket, was appointed Treasurer, and the Rev. William Notcutt, of Ipswich, Secretary. Of the Association in its antecedent form, Mr. Ray, of Ipswich, had been the zealous Treasurer for many years.

In 1847 the elements already existing were gathered together into what is now known as the Suffolk Congregational Union, its avowed object being the promotion of spiritual religion in the county in connexion with the principles of Independency.

It was more completely consolidated in 1859, since which period its course, under the Divine blessing, has been brighter and better.

"The lion in the way" has been slain—we *have* "an interesting object" in view, viz., the spread of the Gospel in the neglected portions of the county; not only in the districts immediately surrounding the churches already established, but in those also which are beyond the circle of their influence. It is indeed, as the resolution already quoted properly recognizes, the duty of the churches to care for the destitute parishes within a short distance of themselves, but there are "regions beyond" which must not be neglected, and which cannot be reached but by instrumentalities provided by the combined contributions of the churches.

The Union seeks to give practical effect to the words of St. Paul, "Ye which are strong ought also to help the weak." There are many small churches in the rural districts of the county which are doing a great work in keeping the Gospel Flag flying, but which are too poor to maintain the work unaided. To these churches the Union makes considerable annual grants of money, by which they are enabled to maintain and reputable ministry, and so contribute to the spread of the Kingdom of God.

For administrative purposes the county is divided into four districts, each with its Committee and District Secretary. From each district a certain number is elected to serve on the Executive Committee, which meets quarterly in Ipswich, with a General, or County Secretary.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT TUDDENHAM HALL, JUNE 22ND, 1908.

Back row, standing, left to right : Rev. A. J. BROWN (Bury), Rev. G. CAKEBREAD (Needham Market), Rev. J. BROWN (Saxmundham), Rev. T. DEVINE (Ipswich), Mr. J. CHAPMAN (Southwold), Rev. W. HEATHER, M.A. (Beccles), Rev. W. TOMALIN (Bungay), Mr. H. F. HARWOOD (Tuddenham), Mr. F. A. UNWIN (Haverhill), Rev. A. A. DOWSETT (Ipswich).

Front row : Mr. W. PIPE (Ipswich), Rev. J. LORD (Horncastle, Centenarian), Mr. H. W. RAFFE (Ipswich), Rev. T. J. HOSKEN (Ipswich, Hon. Sec.), Mr. J. HODGETTS (Horncastle), Mr. G. T. HARWOOD (Battisford).

ADDENDUM (See page 134).

FULL COVENANT OF THE BURY CHURCH, 1646.

Be it known unto all the saints of Sion that wee whose names are underwritten knowing that there is but one eternall God Creator and Governor of all things, distinguished into three wh. beare record in heaven, the Father, ye word, and the holy spirite, and that the eternall son of ye eternall Father took on him our nature and suffered death for our sins, and rose from ye dead the third day, and ascended into the glorious heavens where he is at the right hand of God, makeing intercession for us, who gave commission unto his disciples that they should teach his disciples to do and observe all things which he commanded, and sent his holy spirite according to his promise to assist them, and strengthen them, and to confirme their holy actions, amongst which to erect particular churches of saints hear upon earth was one. And wee being convinced in conscience of the evill of ye Church of England, and of all other states wch. are contrary to Christ's institution. And being (according to Christe's institution and comandements) fully separated not only from them but also from those who communicate with them either publickly or privately, wee resolve by the grace of God not to return unto their vaine inventions, their human devices, their abominable idolatries or superstitious high places which were built and dedicated to idolatry. And we seeing not only the necessity of this separation, but also the great need of continuing in Christian fellowship and societie and that to be of ye visible particular Church of Christ is most needfull for the saints edification in this life, it being ye excelentest kingdome of grace, whereby they may enjoy all the ordinances of God, according to their capability. And seeing that there is no such particular church visible neer unto us but so remote that wee cannot without breach of the Saboth assemble with unless (to the depriving of our families of temporall provision) we forsake the temporall places and imployements wherein God hath set us, and in which estates wee are called. And considering that God allowes of particular Churches in one Nation. And wee his saints being possessed with the thoughts of ye exelence thereof, and the sweete-closing neer-comunion which the saints of God have with Christ therein, wee, in the presence of ye great God, whose glorious fulness the heaven and ye heaven of heavens cannot containe. Wee doe therefore, together with our posteritie covenant to become a

peculiar Temple for the Holy Ghoste to dwell in, an entire spouse of Jesus Christ our Lord of glory, for ye enioyment of all his holy ordinances according to his owne institutions, and so to walke in all his waies so far as he hath revealed unto us or shall reveale hereafter. On testimony wherof (in the town of Edmonsbury in Suffolk this 16th day (of the moneth comonly called August) being the Lord's day) wee doe now subscribe with our hands unto Jehovah and to his Christ.

John Barrow

Anne Barow

John Lanseter and his three children wch he brought in with
himselfe whose names are

John Lanseter

Mary Lanseter

Sameuell Lanseter

William Wood and his son which he brought in with himselfe,
namely

William Wood

Sarah Tompson

Lucrase Potter and her two children which she brought in
with herselfe, whose names are

Robbert Potter

Lucrase Potter

John Throuser (? or Thrower)

John Reuans

Witnesses of these things,

Samuel Chidley

Katharine Chidley

} Member of the Church
} of God in London.

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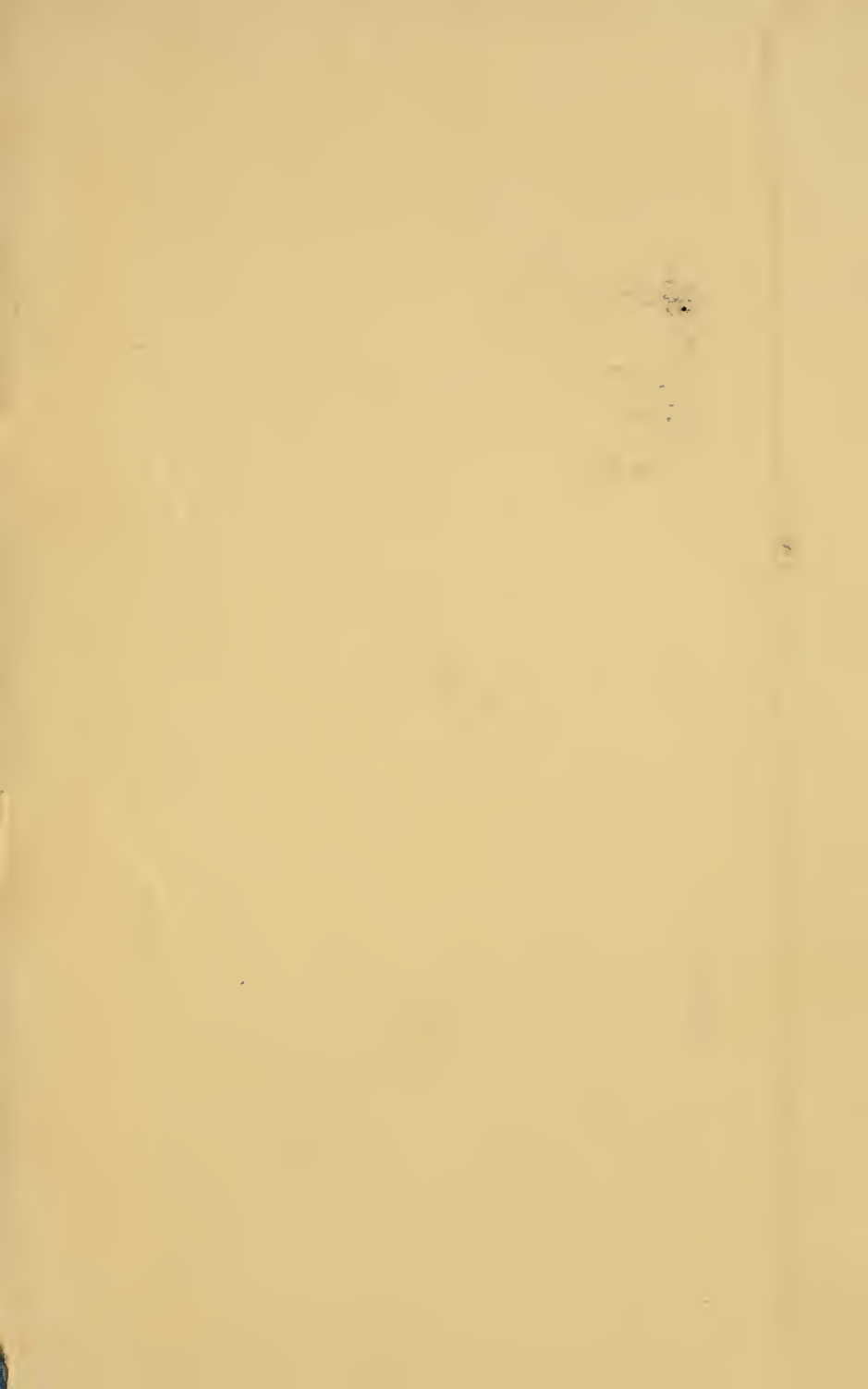
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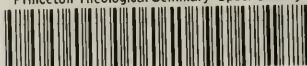
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